

# VIOLENCE, POLITICS and CONFLICT MANAGEMENT in AFRICA:

Envisioning Transformation, Peace and  
Unity in the Twenty-First Century



EDITED BY

Munyaradzi Mawere &  
Ngonidzashe Marongwe

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# **Violence, Politics and Conflict Management in Africa:** Envisioning Transformation, Peace and Unity in the Twenty-First Century

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&  
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### Beyond the Politics of Power and Violence

*Munyaradzi Mawere*

*“Power corrupts; absolute power corrupts absolutely. Great men are almost always bad men” (John Acton 1887).*

The quotation by the historian-cum-moralist, John Acton implies that injustice is pervasive in all human societies. This is because almost all societies have “great men” of their own, who as Acton believes, are immoral due to the corruption of power and indulgence. It is these men, either elevated by their people or by self (self-elevation) that normally play “dirty” politics that more often than not results in conflict, violent-torn situations, wanton destruction of property, casualties and death of the innocent. It is these men, who slobber with the hunger and thirsty of the envious and bigoted superpower to dominate and control other peoples while thwarting their human rights to last iota of their hope. Using the law of the jungle and the Machiavellian type of politics, these great men do whatever is within their means and power, whether morally good or condemnable, to satisfy their ego and self-interests. It is this way that power, especially when politicised, corrupts.

Unfortunately in Africa, such kind of Machiavellian politics is in sync with what is obtaining at almost all levels of society – from the grassroots leadership to the national leadership. In fact, politicking, conflict and violence, either instigated by Africans themselves or by outsiders – external forces –, have had an endemic presence and an enduring legacy on the continent, cutting across the different historic eras and geographic spaces. Various causes, explanations, dynamics and consequences have been experienced differentially at differing but devastating moments for Africa and its people. As Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2009) tells us of Zimbabwe, [*politicking, conflict and*] violence have been common themes in Africa from the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial moments, though with varying

magnitudes. The same observation and concern have prompted other scholars like Žižek (2008) to focus on the nexus between the major forms of violence – subjective violence and the two forms of objective violence, that is, symbolic and systematic violence. For Žižek, subjective violence is that form of violence which is visible such as crime and terror, while objective violence is rooted in language in the form of racism, hate speech and discrimination. Systematic violence is, on the other hand, found in the economic and political systems of the world. As Žižek posits, there is a link between subjective and objective violence, for example, what may be perceived as irrational (subjective) violence could be rooted in the objective forms of violence and the passion for universal justice.

It is also imperative to underscore that violence has always manifested itself multi-dimensionally, implicitly or otherwise, as violence of conquest, anti-colonial struggles, struggles for access to resources, physical, psychological, terrorism, xenophobia and anti-xenophobic attacks, epistemic, poverty and ethnic tensions, among others. In the process, violence has on the one hand, invoked memories of the past and shaped possible directions for the present-future. On the other hand, it has simultaneously produced damaging consequences and brought about positive effects, in almost equal measures. This has led to the production of different modes of engagement and discourses around violence and memory in their varying dimensions. Among the enduring narratives is the idea that violence has revolutionary and liberatory qualities; qualities that both subjugate and liberate. In the Marxist formulation, the violence of the oppressed has been constructed as a significant handmaiden in political and socio-economic transformations and transitions. Although it can be contested, violence alongside memory of the past has also been viewed as significant in the making and re-making of African nationalism and African nation-states. In Zimbabwe, in the context of the farm and industrial takeovers of the new millennium, for example, violence has been perceived in some way as redistributive and constitutive of restorative justice. Equally compelling arguments have been that the various forms of violence manifesting in Africa, as elsewhere beyond the continent, have bred, kindled and ignited dramatic waves and sprouted a lot of human

rights violations, ethnic tensions, wars, refugees, economic destruction and plunder, discrimination, and deaths, besides sluggishly slowing down Africa's development potentials and capabilities.

Yet, while a lot has been observed about some of the different modes of violence and memory in terms of causation, the dynamics and even the consequences, a lot more interrogation is still needed to rill in and understand the chicanery waves of xenophobic and counter-xenophobic attacks, their linkages with mainstream violence; their enduring [negative] effects on socio-political and economic development, as well as proffering lasting solutions to this mind boggling problem that has pervaded the African continent with unimaginable formidable force in the new millennium than in any other time before. In post-colonial Africa, arguably, xenophobic attacks and violence in general are traceable to the late 1960s when the Busia Government of Ghana enacted the Aliens Compliance Order that was largely directed against Nigerian immigrants, and in the early 1980s when Nigerians burned many Ghanaians alive to force-march them out of Nigeria. In the more recent times, whilst the prominent xenophobic attacks have emerged from the South African context and with deleterious effects as witnessed by the widespread attacks on *[ma]kwerekwere* "foreigners," especially of African descent in 2008 and 2015, other sprouts of xenophobic attacks have been witnessed in other countries in the region such as Zambia, Botswana and Namibia. During the attacks in South Africa, for instance, foreigners of African descent from across the Limpopo were physically attacked, their businesses looted or destroyed and their personas pejoratively sneered and derogatorily insulted. Elsewhere in other regions on the continent, there have been cyclic attacks of African [indigenous] immigrants by their fellow African "brothers" and "sisters". The unfolding of the Arab Spring revolts in Libya in 2011, for instance, was camouflaged by insinuations of direct attacks on dark-skinned African immigrants.

Regrettably, for the ordinary people of Africa, little has been done by both academics and African governments to try to understand the logic of the root causes and forge lasting and permanent solutions to curb and purge xenophobia and its associated politics of violence

from the continent. More often than not, African governments and academics, as many other stakeholders, credulously blame perpetrators of xenophobia and violence in general without delving deeper into understanding the morphologies and sundry nature of violence in its many forms, their exact causes and proffer enduring solutions to efface such nefarious and despicable acts in Africa once and for all. It is partly for this reason that xenophobia and its associated violence and politicking have intermittently become an endemic and enduring reality in Africa ever since the independence of the continent from the whims of colonialism in the 1960s.

It is from the mental smouldering conflagration and unequivocal consciousness of the highlighted obtaining reality coupled with the passion for transformation, enduring peace and unity in Africa and beyond, that scholars drawn from across disciplines from around the world, have decided to contribute to this imperative book project, whose focus centres on the trajectories of nerve-chilling experiences of xenophobia, memory, violence and the associated politics under the general theme: “politics, memory, violence and transformation in Africa”. Though from different geographical and disciplinary orientations, all the contributors to this volume generally argue for the need for the 21<sup>st</sup> century Africa to move beyond the politics of power and violence: they all clarionly call for the need to look for peace and transformation beyond the visible limit of conflict and violence. The volume comprises of fourteen chapters, of which the present chapter is the first one.

## **A guide through the book**

As alluded to above, this book interrogates power dynamics in the matrices of violence and conflict management in Africa. Chapter two by Nhemachena critically focuses on identities in both the altern and sub-altern. It observes that there are celebrations, elsewhere in the empire, of hybridisation of identities as well as celebrations of the destruction of African cultures, states, religions, societies, languages and epistemologies. The hybridisation and destruction of identities, as Nhemachena observes, are tactics by the empire meant to ensure unchallenged hegemony by making it difficult for others to recover

their battered post-colonial identities. On this note, Nhemachena argues that, the power and violence on others that empire arrogates, is not about the purity and innocence of empire because it is also tainted by holocausts of colonisation and slave-driving. He further argues in view of corruption that “celebration of the destruction of African states and other institutions is not about corruption being present in Africa because empire itself has been in the business of corruption for centuries; celebrations of the destruction of African institutions is not about accountability being absent in them because empire itself has not accounted for its crimes; it is not about human rights being absent because empire itself has not restored the human dignity of those it enslaved and colonised; and it is not about equality being absent because empire itself detests equality with its former colonies that it continues to exploit”. Basing on these arguments, Nhemachena’s chapter concludes that “the empire has designed methods of maintaining a foothold as an absence presence in postcolonial Africa which like a victim of witchcraft suffers omissions and commissions of acts inconsistent with its societies and cultures”.

Fox’s seminal chapter three discusses the causes of regional security threat in relation to Islamist conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa. In particular, the chapter focuses on the processes of the emergence of institutional ideologically driven radical and often violent Islamist social movements, first in Somalia with the birth of al-Shabaab, and then in Kenya and Tanzania. Fox is apt to note that poor governance in many African countries trigger the emergence and propel the velocity of radical movements in the region. To substantiate this point, Fox gives the case of Somalia and its so-called ‘state failure,’ which for him, is regarded as an important and substantial element in the seeding and subsequent acceleration of political terror in Africa, although not its sole cause. On the same note, Fox makes reference to the Boko Haram, which has been a threat to regional security in west-Africa, particularly Nigeria since 2002. With these examples, Fox thus, argues that “socio-political conditions, frequently ethnic and religious in character, were important preconditions that shaped several conflicts that later emerged”. Besides socio-political and economic conditions, Fox cites poor

policy in the region as another precondition for terrorism in Africa. He thus argues, “while the Organisation of African Unity and its later transmorphed successor, the African Union, have debated and established various counter-terror declarations such as the Algiers Convention on the Prevention and Combatting of Terrorism (1991), the Dakar Declaration against Terrorism (2001), the Algiers Plan of Action on the Prevention and Combatting of Terrorism (2002), and the subsequent Addis Ababa Protocol (2004), specific measures have not always successfully focused on addressing root causes of terrorism (Allison 2015)”. It can be concluded from Fox’s reasoning, therefore, that Africa’s problems of internal security are largely internal, emanating from poor governance, poverty and poor policy design and implementation.

In their luminary chapter four, Marongwe and Mawere grapple with xenophobic violence in South Africa. While interest for some researches have been directed towards the causes of the 2015 attacks and how they differed from the 2008 attacks and counter-attacks, Marongwe and Mawere uniquely explore the emergence of some discourses from the 2015 attacks on Africans from beyond South Africa’s borders. On this note, the chapter ingeniously troubles and theorises the conceptualisation of xenophobia and “the appellations of the discursive narratives including afrophobia, necklacing, the deployment of hate language like lice and ants, a subversion of *Unhu/Ubuntu*, and a third force in the participation and commission to the xenophobic violence of 2015”. Basing on their generative theorisation and critical engagement, Marongwe and Mawere provide a broader but potent definition of xenophobia that incorporates the “attitude[s]” of “a dislike, a fear, or hatred” as well as effects. Drawing on the discourses on xenophobic effects, their critical unpacking and understanding, Marongwe and Mawere conclude that xenophobia is both constitutive of discrimination and violence against immigrants.

Chapter five by Mhango critically and valiantly reflects on colonial violence, that is, violence of the oppressed. He notes that “since the inception of Western administrative systems, Africa has evidenced many violent conflicts resulting from power struggles across the continent”. For Mhango, this violence did not end with the demise of colonial administration in Africa as immediate after

independence, many African countries found themselves facing *coup d'états* and many other forms of violence squabbling among elites that were largely aimed at controlling the reins of power and resources. For Mhango, many of these forms of violence against the innocent of Africa were instigated by former colonial masters who sponsored some African elites of the post-colonial era to revolt against national governments that took over from the colonial regimes. Mhango, following the likes of scholars such as Walter Rodney and George James, goes a step further to link politicking in Africa with underdevelopment on the continent. On this notes, Mhango argues that “in tackling the important issues regarding violence, power, politics and anti-development that have pervaded post-colonial Africa,” the colonial masters employed, *inter alia*, divide-and-rule strategy with which they viciously and perpetually arrest African development. Unfortunately, as Mhango rightly points out, the post-colonial African leaders have adopted to heinously entrench and sustain themselves in power, thereby unleashing violence against their own people. Thus, Mhango argues for the need of a complete change in the political field in Africa.

In their creative and insightful chapter six, Tandi, Mawere and Mubaya grapple with the politics of knowledge production in Africa. The trio observe that there is too much epistemic violence going on in Africa since the inception of colonialism, which in no doubt, has downplayed socio-economic and political development efforts on the continent. This, for them, should be arrested once and for all to ensure that justice prevails at a global scale. The trio, thus, argues that “Africa’s stunted development agenda is largely due to the trajectories of knowledge production and politics associated with it which is largely in favour of the Global North”. From this critical observation, Tandi, Mawere and Mubaya further advance the argument that “knowledge production and power are closely connected in a reciprocal and symbiotic manner, hence the Global North which is on the echelons of political and economic power has the capacity and sole privilege of deciding and dictating the type, content and quality of knowledge to be consumed and disseminated across the globe”. From this realisation, the trio concludes that there is need for African policy makers in the education sector to, while

acknowledging the presence of epistemic pluralism, consider crafting a home grown educational curriculum that offers solutions to African context based problems.

Simon's chapter seven wades into violence in African polity, which he notes is a manifestation of a deep rooted factor in poor governance namely, the neglect of responsibilities by political authorities. In his analysis of violence, Simon adopts a historical interpretative approach with which he argues that "violence in the African polity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century has become an alternative instrument of drawing recognition to some of the issues majority of Africans consider as fundamental to their daily survival". Having noted and discussed the causes, dimensions and various conflict-torn situations associated with violence in Africa in general and Nigeria in particular, Simon concludes that "violence and conflict can be mitigated or managed by Africans *themselves* if necessary authorities developed a consultative crisis management approach (CCMA) to quickly identify and proffer solutions to potential pro-violent situations".

Chapter eight by Zhou meticulously grapples with the question of politics and how it impacts on development and socio-economic trajectories in Africa in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Zhou is wit to critically dissect and unravel the intricacies and complexities of Africa's changing socio-political and economic systems and how these play out on the world economic system. In his analysis, he is apt to suggest possible solutions to the challenges bedevilling Africa such as conflict, poverty, disease, corruption, and constriction of the democratic space. Zhou, thus, argues that although "incredible strides in gender and women empowerment, considerable progress in many benchmarks of human development, impressive economic growth in some countries such Nigeria, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique and Tanzania, urbanisation and the emerging middle class," the envisaged transformation can only be meaningful if fully comprehended within the spirit of Pan-Africanism and the 2013 continental Action Plan - Agenda 2063, frameworks which seek to spur and tie in action all Africans inside the continent and in the Diaspora around peace and prosperity. To arrest the current problems haunting Africa, Zhou further suggests that "beyond 2016,



investments in agriculture (green revolution), gender equity, constant supply of fresh water (blue revolution), infrastructural development (including power), African demographic dividend, peace and stability, and formalisation of informal sector could narrow the indefensible gaps between the rich and poor, urban and rural, and men and women.” Zhou concludes his chapter by suggesting the implementation of China’s principle of sovereign and business equality, which he believes is more appropriate than the Euro-American conditional bi-lateral trade and investment. This, for him, will be the only surest way to guarantee the continued rising of Africa.

*Ténógboyè*’s chapter nine tackles head-on the issue of conflict management and transformation in Africa. Noting the persistence of conflict-torn situations and violence in post-colonial Africa, *Ténógboyè* argues for the need to look into the past for solutions. He makes a case for *Ifá*, with which he argues that besides used in spheres such as morality, it is also a philosophy that can be used to ensure conflict management and transformation in Nigeria. To substantiate his claim, *Ténógboyè* convincingly discusses how the *Ifá* epistemological principles influence the various types of conflicts management, “including: preventive (pre-conflict) and corrective (post-conflict), which is management of conflict after it had occurred, that is, the cure to conflict”. Using the *Ifá* as a reference case for conflict management and transformation, *Ténógboyè* concludes that “the more Africans are able to explore their traditional institutions and values to solve their problems or challenges, the better for peaceful and harmonious co-existence, thereby, transforming the entire continent”. *Ténógboyè*, thus, calls for the enhancement for the deployment of African solutions for Africans problems.

Chapter ten by Masarira creatively investigates the efficacy of the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15: 1-35, hereafter Acts 15) as a possible model for conflict resolution in Africa in general and in particular the Zimbabwean political landscape in the context of the Government of National Unity (GNU). As Masarira tells us the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15 was a first century conference which was convened to solve the conflict between Jewish and Gentile Christianity on the criteria of accepting Gentile Christians into Jewish Christianity. Yet, noting the similarities that the Jerusalem Council shares with Global

Political Agreement (GPA) that led to the formation of the GNU in 2009 in Zimbabwe, Masarira argues that “there are kerygmatic strategies of conflict-resolution that can be applied to the contemporary Zimbabwean political situation in the context of the Global Political Agreement (GPA)”. The conflict-resolution strategy is one. Thus, drawing on the similarities between the GPA and the Jerusalem Council as well as the stamina of the Jerusalem Council in itself, of resolving conflicts between groups presented on ethnic and difference in opinion, Masarira strongly believes that the latter could work as a model for conflict-resolution in the Zimbabwean political landscape.

In their perceptive chapter eleven, Mawere and van Stam focus on the African philosophy of Ubuntu/Unhu. The duo acknowledges that Ubuntu/Unhu has been discussed by many scholars within and outside the continent, but mainly in descriptive ways. To show uniqueness in their work, Mawere and van Stam choose to theorise Ubuntu/Ubuntu and demonstrate how it, in general, contributes to transformation, peace and unity in the presence of violence and conflict-torn situation. On that note, Mawere and van Stam designate concepts in Ubuntu that are of an epistemological and transcendental or metaphysical nature. It is these concepts that, through an epistemological, hermeneutical and ethnographic review, the duo uses to contribute towards the dialogue on how to mediate politicking, conflict and violence in Africa and beyond. Considering the contribution of Ubuntu to the promotion of peace and harmony, Mawere and van Stam equate it to communal love which at all costs provides an undergirding for the proposal and quest for perpetual peace, unity and positive change. Mawere and van Stam, thus, conclude that in an effort to explore avenues to unearth approaches to counter nefarious and violent acts in Africa and beyond, the African philosophy of Ubuntu is identified as one of the philosophies most appropriate for the promotion and guaranteeing of peace and unity among world societies.

Chapter twelve by Duri painstakingly examines the violence against Zimbabwean migrants in Botswana’s rural areas from the year 2000, which from the author’s research findings, was largely carried out by traditional leaders such as chiefs, headmen and their

councillors with the blessings of the national government and its various arms such as the judiciary, the army and the police. Without losing sight to romanticise violence, Duri unveils a hidden agenda that prompted most Batswana chiefs and headmen to resort to violence against the Zimbabwean migrants. For Duri, most Batswana traditional leaders resorted to violence as a way of affirming their identities and reasserting their traditional hegemony which they felt was being threatened by the increasing presence of Zimbabwean migrants. Yet Duri is quick to note that, the violence unleashed against Zimbabwean immigrants did not only dehumanise the Batswana people, but undermined the authority of traditional leaders and compromised the wellbeing of the local Botswana communities in ways too numerous to mention. Basing on his findings, Duri concludes that the dehumanising experience of “xenophobic violence does not have firm ideological foundations but is strongly rooted in struggles over material and immaterial resources,” hence should be condemned at all costs.

Ngono and Duri’s chapter thirteen, critically examines the role and increased involvement of women in terrorist activities in the 21<sup>st</sup> century Africa, “either as victims or, most importantly, as agents”. The duo’s focus on women and terrorism is premised on their observation that many women and young girls in Africa have, over the years, fallen victim to terrorist activities in a number of ways, ranging from being agents to victims and “shields” of terrorist groups. For Ngono and Duri, this obtaining lamentable reality warrants interrogation in order to establish the rationale behind the increasing involvement of women and young girls in terrorism. From their researches, Ngono and Duri establish that some women such as widows, for example, involve themselves in suicide bombing to avenge the deaths of their husbands at the hands of government forces while others are disgruntled mothers who avenge the deaths of their children. Basing on such findings, Ngono and Duri argue that women should not always be viewed solely as victims of terrorism in 21<sup>st</sup> century Africa, but also as agents of terrorism pursuing their own agendas. Thus, Ngono and Duri audaciously correct the widely held misconception that women are normally coerced by their male counterparts to participate in terrorist activities.

The last chapter by van Reisen and Gerrima rethinks the question of power as enunciated by Foucault. Yet departing from Foucault's analysis, van Reisen and Gerrima examine "how political-cultural national identities are negotiated in today's ICT-facilitated globalised society". While the duo acknowledges that the impact of ICT on social change in Africa has been studied in view of mobility by scholars such as Nyamnjoh and Shoro (2009), among others, their chapter identifies the impact of ICT on the identity of nationhood in the newly independent Eritrea. On this note, van Reisen and Gerrima argue that "the impact of ICT is more profound than just a socio-political change, but acts at a deeper level, creating globalised national identities". For the duo, this creates "a new order of things" in Eritrean identities of nationhood, which for them warrant incisive investigation. Basing on this hypothesis, van Reisen and Gerrima sought to examine "the Eritrean identities and how these have changed in the 25 years since Eritrea gained independence from Ethiopia in 1991, after the 30-year war has ended." The duo, thus, identifies the role of ICTs in the process of altering the Eritrean identities. Drawing from their findings, they conclude that narratives that support multiple identities in Eritrea are fast expanding and opposed to the previously linked Westphalian claim underpinning the idea of the state of Eritrea that connects Eritreans to a bordered land. Thus, the link between Eritrean identities and the state is no longer the only dominant narrative, but one among others forms of identities.

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### Double-Trouble: Reflections on the Violence of Absence and the ‘Culpability’ of the Present in Africa

*Artwell Nhemachena*

#### Introduction

Nothing is as puzzling as the endemic violence that appears to defy solutions in postcolonial Africa. Thus instead of focusing on the visible local perpetrators as has been the custom up to now, scholars have started tracing the violence to coloniality, including some covert ways in which empire continues to poke into Africa decades after the end of formal colonialism (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013; see also Hardt and Negri, 2000). For purposes of this chapter, the term empire represents the old colonial empire that is manifesting in different forms either as global matrix of power (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013) or as Hardt and Negri’s (2000) emerging new “Empire” that is antithetical or opposed to existence of African or Global South nation states. Some scholars have observed some of ways the empire continues to shape institutions in Africa, African subjectivities and in some cases to meddle covertly in African political, economic and social affairs including the ways that foment violence (Boyle, 2013; Schmidt, 2013). The inequities of structural violence (Farmer, 2005) including by the empire, alias globalisation, have been noted in scholarship but what is lacking are the ways in which empire hides the daily violence that it perpetrates on a planetary scale, which violence often results in more deaths as compared to direct physical localised violence (Prontzos, 2004). Noting the shortcomings of focusing on visible violence, Žižek (2008) insists on the need to disentangle ourselves from the fascinating lure of directly visible violence performed by clearly identifiable agents such as “evil individuals,” “disciplined repressive apparatuses” and “fanatical crowds” who are just the most visible of the multiple forms of violence. Žižek (2008) exhorts us to pay attention to the often

invisible backgrounds which generate the visible localised outbursts of violence. Žizek (2008: 12-15), thus, encourages us to pay attention to invisible violence embodied, among others, in the imposition of language and by global capital, so that we properly understand the “irrational” outbursts of “subjective” visible violence. Resonating with Hannah Arendt’s (1965; 1972:137) argument that [global] bureaucracy makes it impossible to localise responsibility and to identify the enemy Žizek (2008) contends that there is violence inherent in globalisation, in capitalism and fundamentalism yet because of the focus on visible individual agents and fanatical crowds, the invisible violence is not that much noticed. While other scholars focus on violence by visible agents Žizek (2008: 12-15) contends that the “solipsistic,” speculative and self-propelling metaphysical dance of [global] capital violently affects social realities of populations and countries yet no-one is made responsible for this violence which remains as anonymous as it is planetary. The paradox in the violence that is made invisible is that much as colonial officials who presided over the colonial holocaust were proclaimed humanitarian and saints by Popes, empire and capitalism and still retain the privilege to perpetrate planetary ultra-objective, systemic violence without being accountable for it (Etienne Balibar cited in Žizek, 2008: 13, 14-5). Owing to its dogginess on accountability for violence, its spectrality and invisibility, empire has been interpreted as attempting to displace and replace the Supreme Being, to become God in the world, manifesting its presence in absence and expecting inhabitants of the earth to accept its values as well as impetuous interferences without being too critical (Gordon, 2005: 1; Nesteruk, 2005). I will return to the issues of absence presence in the section on spectres of the living dead, suffice it to say here that absence presence is meant to capture the spectrality of the invisible violence that often manifests as the invisible hand of the market, when in fact it is the invisible hand of the imperial control of economies and politics of the postcolonies. In other words, with the demise of formal colonialism empire became invisible; it became a spectral absence presence.

Instead of physically enslaving its victims as before (Peeters, 2008), empire has become more of a spectre on the subjectivities of Africans. In other words, it has become as spooky as it is elusive in

the local and international courts of accountability and transparency. By grafting itself into the subjectivities of human beings and animating technology, empire has not only been able to hide its identity but it has also become a spook with the capacity to use anything from human beings to technology and nature as its extensions facilitating its planetary invisible action at a distance. Though some celebrate the emergence of the technology including posthuman/virtual humans/robots (Haraway, 1991) as heralding peace, others argue that the robots/posthumans are replications of imperial loathing of the bodies of human others whose natural human essences are now threatened with replacements by robots/posthumans (Pagello *et al*, 2000; Baofu, 2010). Thus, writing about robots and their proxy roles in [spectral] violence, Hannah Arendt, (1972: 149) argues: “Only the development of robot soldiers, which.....would eliminate the human factor completely and, conceivably, permit one man with a push button to destroy whomever he pleased ...”

The contentions by Hannah Arendt (1972) not only show how empire effectively becomes an absence presence perpetrating violence at a distance by deploying robot soldiers [via the pushing of buttons] to other areas of the planet. They also show how the assumption of absence of human essence legitimises violence. Although contemporary Africans regard themselves as beneficiaries of human rights, presupposing recognition of their human essence, the emergence of robots/posthumans is argued to entail loss and denigration of that human essence. Yet, even as such human rights are popular, Africans remain victims of violence of absence where their modes of engagement and epistemologies including in science, technology, property ownership and political institutions continue to be haunted by imperial spook. But empire thrives on the creation of statelessness for others (Baehr, 2000: 32-3) and on creating ‘empire’s multitudes’ out of national populations (Hardt and Negri, 2000) as well as creation of posthuman robots to undo human sovereignty and autonomy in the peripheries. Battering and delegitimising the nationalisms of others (Roehrenbeck, 2010) while paradoxically projecting the ‘nationalisms’ at empire’s centre as the ‘international’ has become one of the marks of imperial violence of absence. Key in

the violence of internationalisation is that looted African property and resources including cultural artefacts some of which are locked in western museums (Heller-Roazen, 2002; Hajar, 2000; Opoku, 2010; Roehrenbeck, 2010) have not been accompanied by the internationalisation of Africans who largely remain impoverished and fixed to their locations even as their resources are being exchanged and circulated in the west. In other words, Africans are absent where their artefacts and other looted resources are present. In other words, too, Africans suffer the violence of absence not because they are absent in the world or in Africa but because they are present where their material resources, cultures, polities, societies and relations are absent. What I call violence of absence involves [spectral] presences that dislocate, relocate and mask their violence in such a way that their violence often gets misattributed to the ontologically present that happen to be located in areas haunted by the [spectral] presences. The argument of this chapter is that Africans that are ontologically visibly present on their continent, that is haunted by the violence of imperial [spectral] absence presences, always risk being considered culpable for the spooky operations of the spectres of violence of absence.

Writing about absence and presence, Nesteruk (2005: 17) argues that presence and absence appear both in theology and in science. As such, absence does not imply lack of authenticity, actuality or lack of transcendence. Adami, (2003) further argues that absences are present since we can feel, perceive and sense them distinctively, manifesting as inventory of traces. In addition, Casey, (1982) argues that it is difficult to conceive something that would be perpetually absent and never present. Going forward, he/she contends that there are situations in which neither presence nor absence applies because horizons merge. Although it has been argued that their elusive status makes them objects difficult to pin down, define or represent (Adami, 2003), absences have been defined by others as what is out of reach by virtue of existing elsewhere, existing or possibly not existing (Casey, 1982). These difficulties relating to absences have been linked to disappeared bodies, undocumented subjects and stolen objects that pose serious problems to the practice of representation and the act of remembrance (Adami, 2003). Some



scholars have noted difficulties such as of representing absences, of perceiving, distinguishing absences from presences and difficulties of how to count, individuate, locate and classify absences (O'Callaghan, 2011). However, Adami (2003) argues that just as there is a phenomenology and ontology, so there is also a political and social history of absences, a history usually associated with violence and repression. Adami (2003: 5) appears to be concerned about absence in terms of loses unrepresented minorities, clandestine and undocumented immigrants, people abducted and made to disappear from the chronicles of history. Thus, he is concerned with what Sorensen (O'Callaghan, 2011) calls privational absences/negative phenomena that are commonly parasitic. But unlike those that argue that absences are difficult to locate, O'Callaghan (2011) understands absences as having location where presence is not.

While resonating with Das (2004), that both the state and the global have spectral presences in everyday life, this chapter argues that spectrality alone is not a problem because in African everyday life there are spectral presences of ghosts of the dead. As such, spookiness becomes a problem when it accounts for spooky and often surreptitious violence. However, where spookiness causes the violence of absence, there is need to consider which absence presence, local or remote poses greater challenges of recovering that which has been rendered into absence. The fact that some African leaders [as indeed colonists] who turn to corruption chose to invest their proceeds far away from the victims presupposes that the longer the cast of absence presence, the harder it is to recover losses (Kirtton *et al*, 2007; Akol, 2006). Equally significant is that the greater the distance in spatial, social, spiritual and cultural senses between perpetrators of violence and victims, the harder it is to secure redress. It is arguable that this is the reason why empires chose to pull subjects, kicking and screaming, as far away from their cultures, from own identities and subjectivities as possible in order to make it difficult for them to claim autonomy and sovereignty that would aid recovery. The chapter argues that celebrations of hybridisation of identities as well as celebrations of the destruction of African cultures, states, religions, societies, languages and epistemologies are in fact ways in which empire wants to ensure unchallenged hegemony

by making it difficult for others to recover their battered postcolonial identities. It is argued that the power, and violence on others that empire arrogates, is not about the purity and innocence of empire because it is also tainted by holocausts of colonisation and slave-driving. It is argued that celebration of the destruction of African states and other institutions is not about corruption being present in Africa because empire itself has been in the business of corruption for centuries; celebrations of the destruction of African institutions is not about accountability being absent in them because empire itself has not accounted for its crimes; it is not about human rights being absent because empire itself has not restored the human dignity of those it enslaved and colonised; and it is not about equality being absent because empire itself detests equality with its former colonies that it continues to exploit. The chapter, thus, argues that empire has designed methods of maintaining a foothold as an absence presence in postcolonial Africa which like a victim of witchcraft suffers omissions and commissions of acts inconsistent with its societies and cultures.

For purposes of this chapter, presence and absence are not conflated with the ontologically present and absent: while the present and the absent focus in the Derridean 'here and now' (O'Loughlin, 2010: 141), the terms absence and presence are used broadly to include things and entities [covert and overt] in processes of coming and going. In other words the terms presence absence also include that which can neither be easily accounted for as absent nor as present even as it has effects on the present. Thinking in terms of presences absences allows us to interrogate what is often masked as absent when in effect it has affective presence; it allows the unmasking of what is often present but masked as absence. Presences can also be understood in terms of presencing or as absences manifesting as virtual dimensions of presences. Paying attention to absence presences ensures that scholars do not reduce violence to what is ontologically visible and present or to the Derridean 'here and now'.

What I call the violence of absence presence include the violence occasioned by disappearances and appearances, including by spectral presences of global and national structures that cascade to the levels

of everyday life. While other scholars have theorised violence in terms of structural, symbolic and systemic violence (Žižek, 2008), the violence of absence is different. The difference is that structural, systemic and symbolic violence presume that structures, systems and symbols are inherently violent but on the other hand, the violence of absence theorises violence in terms of absence and presence of structures, systems and symbols. The violence of absence does not consider structures, systems and symbols to be inherently or always violent as indeed absence of structures, systems and symbols, depending on their relevance and appropriateness, can account for greater anarchic violence. Contrary to assumptions in theories about structural, systemic and symbolic violence that would advocate for destroying structures, systems and symbols, the theory of violence of absence calls for attention to violence emanating from the presence of structures and systems but it also calls for attention to nihilistic violence emanating from the absence of structures, systems and symbols. Thus, the notion of violence of absence presence stresses the need to notice the violence emanating from the comings and goings of things and entities; the vulnerabilities emanating from absence that is not quite absent and the presence that is not quite present. The notion of violence of absence makes it possible to take scholarly cognisance of the fact that violence is not only a result of those found on the scenes but it often results from spooky spectres, which often conceal their essences and identities as well as those of what they disappear and make off with. Therefore, the violence of absence can be understood by revisiting the logic of spectres that, although once banished as absent by western objectivist epistemologies privileging the ontologically present, has found favour in Derridean (1993; 2006) scholarship on hauntology. Hauntology in Derridean terms entails states of temporal, historical and ontological disjunctions in which what is ontologically immediate is replaced by the figure of the ghost, meaning by, that which is neither present nor absent, neither dead nor alive.

## **The Spectres of the Living Dead, Absence Presences and the Violence of Absence in Africa**

Focusing on the 'here and now' aids Africans in missing the broader horizons of life including absence presences. Said differently, focusing exclusively on the 'here and now' produces ignorance (Pinto, 2014; Proctor *et al*, 2008; Sullivan *et al*, 2007)-a subject for agnotology- of the broader metaphysical and cosmological aspects bearing on life. The challenge is that focusing on the 'here and now' assists Africans to miss the ways in which the broader global, imperial capitalist spectral absence presences account for violence in the local. Thus, focusing on the 'here and now' also aids Africans in missing the culpability of the global imperial structural, systemic, symbolic and material violence that concretises, coalesces and materialises in the local. Focusing on the 'here and now' makes it possible for Africans to miss invisible absence presences including how empire has increasingly come to replace traditional African metaphysical-cosmological entities, including the invisible living dead. While imperial western epistemologies have dismissed African metaphysical-cosmological entities as non-existent or as demons, imperial spectrality has in fact increasingly assumed the logics of the invisible metaphysical-cosmological entities particularly in relation to the invisible systemic and symbolic violence by the invisible global [capitalist] matrices of power (Zizek, 2008; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013). So, apart from Africa being haunted by imperial ideologies, understood from Ubani, (2011: 121) as 'imperial demons' that are deployed to pacify Africans and ensure that they beam broad smiles even when empire is denigrating them, empire has also visited spiritual violence on Africa.

Besides being haunted by restless unappeased spirits of the African dead that suffered imperial slavery and colonial holocaust (Casid, 2005), Africa suffers the violent visitations of empire that suppresses and distorts African cultures to ensure that those Africans that were unjustly killed, enslaved and robbed are conveniently forgotten and banished from returning lest they remind the living about the imperial horrors they suffered and their quests for battles for restitution and compensation. Increasingly returning from the

land of the dead to possess the living (Craffert, 2015; Gonzales, 2009), some of the dead are demonised for wanting to show to the living their backs, heads, chests and faces that suffered empire's red-hot iron branding with insignia of slavery (*BBC News*, 8 February 2006; 18:47 GMT; *The Guardian* 9 February, 2006). But keen to retain its position as judge and arbiter over others, empire is afraid of asking forgiveness for crimes of the past, choosing as it does to argue that no one is innocent on earth (Derrida, 2001) and that what is needed is for the victims to observe an ethics of sacrifice that involves giving oneself to the other without the hope of return.

Thus, while empire demonises Africans who consort with their living dead, many of who died directly or indirectly at the hands of empire, it [empire] paradoxically elevates to saints the [churches and] Bishops some of whom owned enslaved Africans, killed and robbed the Africans (see *BBC News*, 8 February 2006, 18:47 GMT; *The Guardian*, 9 February 2006; Cadwallader, 2010; Woodward, 1996). In this way, empire, by scapegoating, not only seeks to banish and forget its violence on the absent African ancestors but it seeks to replace the African ancestors with imperial [spectres] ideologies. The imperial ideologies of purity [notwithstanding impurity] at the centre of empire and pollution in the peripheries did not only justify the payment of compensation [not to slaves themselves but] to colonisers and enslavers, including churches and Bishops that owned slaves; the same ideological assumptions underlie the planetary violence with impunity that empire continues to enjoy. So, Africans are expected by empire not to carry the burdens of their own ancestors, demonised as evil and as responsible for the suffering among Africans. Rather Africans are expected to accept their roles as beasts of burden for the curses of empire that legitimise African enslavement and (neo-)colonisation (Haynes, 2000; 2002; Sterling, 2005; Glaze, 1984). Without consulting and agreeing with Africans, empire has displaced and replaced African ancestors with the white cursed Noah's son, to whose Biblical curse the institution of enslavement of Africans is attributed even if paradoxically he was white and his descendants did not settle in Africa but in Canaan (Lewis, 1971 cited in Merah, 1998 ).

This strategy of making someone else bear the burdens of your curse is understood in the author's vernacular Shona language as *kurisirira*. In *kurisirira*, a family or people who do not want or are unable to retribute or compensate the dead or spirits that they have wronged invite the spirit to get into a hen, a goat or a human being that is then freed into the bush to wander as the new abode of the spirit. Some of the ceremonies involve naming the human individuals after the wronged spirits as a way of appeasing the spirit with an award of a new host in which to live. The human individuals, like the animals or fowls also used in this ritual, are given sham freedom to roam about, they are released from family obligation since naming them after an alien spirit means they cease to belong to their families. Thus, *kurisirira* is a process of transferring a curse to an innocent victim and that individual or victim is given sham freedom to roam "freely" when in fact being host of wronged avenging spirit they are unfree and controlled at a spiritual metaphysical level. As I argue in the paragraph below, many Africans got ceased by *mashavi* or foreign spirits since the inception of colonialism such that some of the possessed could speak English, French, German and Portuguese [languages of the possessing spirits] even though they had not learned these languages (see Gelfand, 1959; Bullock, 1950). The fact that (neo)colonial scholars interpreted *kurisirira* and *mashavi* possession as mere local African afflictions served to hide ways in which the processes occur at global, imperial international levels. Bullock, (1950) and Gelfand, (1959) could have gone on to investigate how Africans afflicted by *mashavi* or alien spirits [of Westerners and other origins] did not only speak the alien languages but were also motivated including in matters of violence by the alien spirits possessing them.

Discernible in relations between empire and Africa are efforts by the former to use the Western versions of the Bible to legitimise the violence of enslavement and colonisation of the latter; equally discernible are the efforts by empire to use its naturalistic animistic scientific epistemologies and ontologies to legitimise enslavement and colonisation of Africans (Nhemachena, 2016). The substitution of the curse on the White Noah's son such that it is now read as the curse meant for the Black Africans, who were absent when the sin

was committed, is as much a matter of scapegoating as it is of sacrificing the latter for the metaphysical spiritual sins of the former. Scapegoating does not only involve emplacing the wrath of gods onto innocent people selected on the basis of their race, ethnicity or religion (Welch, 2006: 35); it is also evident where violence and crises [often perpetrated by those with the greatest power to label others] are displaced onto innocent and often unwary people (see Tobias, 1964; Pfisch, 2005). African people have always been wary that spirits of early missionary travellers, hunters and colonists who died on the continent and returned as *mashavi* (foreign spirit) to trouble them (see Gelfand, 1959; Bullock, 1950). However, missionaries, colonists and slave drivers, who considered Africans to have no souls of their own, were impatient on their missions to ensure that Africans accepted the souls that missionaries brought (Nanjira, 2010; Hurskainen, 2004). While missionaries and colonists suppressed African ancestors and African prophecy (Hansen, 1995; Douglas *et al*, 1995; Setiloane, 1976; Daneel, 1987), other scholars have celebrated Africans' possession by [foreign] spirits and by "inorganic forces or vitalities" that they consider as tools to ensure that Africans change their cultures and identities (Epprecht, 1998: 643; see also Poxon, 2001). Such possession has been celebrated even if it is by malevolent spirits that generate problems ranging from marital, fertility, sexual, family, morbidity and mortality for the Africans concerned (Schmidt, 2013). More worrying is the fact that missionaries and other colonists demonised African ancestors, while paradoxically looting their ['demonic'] sacred objects to keep in their own houses and museums; and even as the missionaries and colonists gave their own names and those of their own European ancestors to Africans in ways that indicated switching ancestry. Useful to think with, in this regard is Werbner's, (1989) argument that the human condition is a manifestation of the awakening of divinities and thus that giving the name of a divinity to a child determines the character [good or bad] of that individual. Giving the names of western ancestors to African children as missionaries did need to be considered in theorising of the violence that has proved resistant to African solutions.

The question that needs to be considered is whether it is the visible Africans that have become so prone to perpetrating violence

or it is the effect of western invisible divinities bearing Noah's curse, acting in absence presence, after whose names Africans have been named since the colonial era. The question is also whether such violence is a result of the colonial imperial banishment of disinherited aggrieved African ancestors who, robbed, enslaved, exploited and demonised are now restless. In other words the issue is whether the violence in Africa is a result of the displacement and replacement of African ancestors with the cursed white son of Noah as well as whether Africans are suffering the violence of absence of their own banished ancestors bearing unfinished business even as they lie in their graves. If seeing a parent naked is such a sinful act as to warrant the interminable Noah's curse, outlasting both the cursed son and the father who pronounced the curse, one wonders how much sin empire has encouraged Africans to commit for centuries by mocking the nakedness of their parents and ancestors via neglect in the service of western individualism. Similarly, if seeing a parent naked is as sinful, one wonders how much sinfulness Africans are encouraged to commit by mocking parents and ancestry who have already suffered at the hands of colonists' ancestors that have now been deemed saintly enough to deserve African tithes even as African parents and ancestors are looking on, starving and walking naked? What mocking of parents and ancestry is more than calling them 'demons of poverty' when in fact it is empire that looted the properties, labour power, and livestock of the same ancestors? When empire demonises African ancestry, is it not just its way of scapegoating those in absence, those that it has denied voice and right of return to narrate their centuries old suffering at the hands of empire? Is it not similar to instances where empire blames those that it has rendered socially dead and invisible in the world, those that remain in the neglected cauldrons of the peripheries?

The ways in which those in absence presence permeate African subjectivities are hardly considered in studies of violence. The criminal law, based as it is on Western epistemologies that privilege the present focuses on whether or not subjective intent or *mens rea* was present at the time of the offence. Spectres of absence presence are hardly considered yet at spiritual, metaphysical, religious and ideological levels African subjectivities have, since the colonial era,



been stirred up to revolt. The identity crises that are being celebrated in Eurocentric scholarship in terms of 'hybridity' and 'creolisation' are evidence of this revolt within African subjectivities that effectively translates to absence of identity for those affected. Denial of identity is another way of pushing Africans into zones of nonbeing (Fanon, 1967), into nothingness; it is another way of rendering Africans nameless and unnameable in the same way slaves and other colonial subjects deprived of their own names were reduce to nothingness. It is, as Firtzpatrick, (2012) argues, a way of rendering Africans identityless, suppressing and defiling African naming systems so as to erase and suppress African memories encapsulated in their naming practices. In studies of violence and subjectivities, the havoc caused by the imperial displacement and replacement of African names, and violence associated with invocations of such imperial names, need to be studied. The colonial imperial displacement of the violence of naming continents, countries and individual African subjectivities (Mapara, 2013; Magudu *et al*, 2014; Dayimani, 2015; Mhango, 2016; Pfukwa, 2007) partly explain the visible violence that materialised and is visibly experienced locally.

In terms of African indigenous religions, the human condition is understood as an awakening of divinities and so Africans perform rituals to speak to and mollify divinities (Werbner, 1989). Thus to prevent and to quell children's violence or unruliness, parents would invoke the ancestors after whose names the children were named (Mubiru, 2012; Rao, 1990). In such a context it is possible to perform rituals in which the totems and praise-names would be uttered for the specific ancestor after whom the child was named, asking for intervention to quell the mischief and unruliness. It is important to note for purposes of this chapter that in contemporary Africa where children are named after imperial colonial ancestry, it is understandably a challenge for Africans to control unruliness. It is worse in a context where rituals that were relied upon to tame children and ensure their conformity to African norms and values have been eroded and suppressed by colonists and empire. African parents do not know the totems and praise names of the imperial colonial ancestry after whom their children are named nor do they know how to invoke or rebuke them when the children misbehave

and become unruly. Much worse if the parents rebuke the children calling out their names, in effect the names of imperial colonial ancestry, western human rights epistemologies that privilege the visible ontologically present categorise such actions as child abuse. In essence African children have been conflated with anti-theological nonorganic imperial vitalities some of which have fractured personhood and the African selfhood of those possessed and rendered dangerously impure (Boddy, 1989; 2005; Douglas, 2002; Poxon, 2001; Perera, 2001; Kwon, 2010; Quiggin, 2010). Empire knows very well that to allow African parents to rebuke African children named after imperial ancestry is in fact to rebuke and chastise imperial ancestry at a metaphysical level. To prevent the rebuking and ritual flagellation of imperial ancestry, empire dissuades African discipline, even if modesty.

While other scholars thinking from anti-foundationalist postmodernist positions celebrate absence of or erosion of secure cultural moorings, absence of true and authentic identities and the age of hyperreality or surrealism, it is precisely the absence of secure mooring in Africa, absence of true authentic identities that explain the violence. Celebrating the emergence of hyper-reality or surrealism and the absence of reality, authenticity and truth as postmodernists do is in fact legitimisation of violence. If there is no reality, truth, authenticity anymore, real perpetrators of violence cease to exist, real victims of violence also cease to exist and in fact real violence itself ceases to exist; everything becomes a mere sign and not reality in the postmodernist sense. While postmodernists explain violence in terms of the existence of differences, I will argue here that violence is also explicable in terms of absence of difference, absence of foundations of reality, authenticity and truth. Colonial imperial violence did not simplistically result from binaries or differences; in fact colonists conflated themselves with God and purity while at the same time conflating Africans with the Devil and impurity. They also conflated Africans with animals while conflating themselves with the human and super humans. Indeed, they conflated themselves with African territories in efforts to dedifferentiate themselves from Africans as precursor to robbing them. Africans require their authentic, real and true identities so that they are not pushed into zones of nothingness

where they are sacrificed or where they are made to carry the burdens, including curses, of the (neo)colonial imperial 'others' in the false postmodern belief that identities have become indistinguishable.

In a world, as argued elsewhere in this chapter, where global sacrifice of others has become more prevalent than even in traditional societies, it is absolutely necessary to have clear identities so that one is not sacrificed or at least mistaken to suffer the faults of the other. In a context where former colonies were gaining independence and in the 1960s when postmodernism became increasingly popular among western scholars, dedifferentiation and erosion of distinction were understandable theoretical positions given the anxiety colonists had about the possibility of reverse racism and accountability for their historical faults. Dedifferentiation and erosion of distinction at theoretical levels have not necessarily translated to empirical erosion of distinctions between colonisers and colonised. However, the postmodernist theoretical position has rendered powerful ideologies to tame newly independent African countries, and generate from them a willingness to carry the past, present and future burdens of empire in the belief that identities between coloniser and colonised have become [magically] indistinct. To celebrate the erosion of distinctions or dedifferentiation is in fact to erode the aspect that is crucial for liability for crimes including for colonisation and enslavement. However, as witnessed in the International Criminal Court where only present African leaders are summoned (Murithi, 2013) for execution, Africans are held accountable for what happens in Africa even as they are termed [impure] hybrids bearing both African and imperial legacies; yet the empire that originated some of the legacies remains immune to prosecution merely because it is erroneously assumed to be absent on a continent that it continues to ravage in absence.

The challenge is that empire preaches and celebrates globalisation, including erosion of distinctions and identities, while at the same time it denies its complicity, in terms of the implicate order metaphysics underpinning globalisation, in planetary violence. Thus, empire wants to eat its proverbial cake and have it; it wants to claim erosion of distinctions while paradoxically distinguishing itself from the violence in Africa for which only African leaders are deemed

accountable even if empire has spooky and pokey presence in the continent's predicament.

The paradox in imperial violence of absence is that African ancestors, prophets and God have not only been denied voice (Setioane, 1976; Daneel, 1970; Bullock, 1950), but they have also been conflated [and considered indistinguishable from] with demons and the Devil without being allowed to defend themselves. While empire denied voice to others, it has on the other hand strived to retain its own voice in the postcolonies even when the same empire has long been pronounced socially dead at African independence. Highly suspect are missionary accounts that erroneously assumed that God so continentalised as to be resident only on the continent of Europe and that he was so disabled that He could not travel to Africa except by sending "abler" missionaries. Why missionaries suddenly rendered God dumb, who the Bible states used to speak, as to be incapable without the written word to speak and testify his independent presence to Africans, is suspect. The question is: might presupposing God to be as dumb as to require the aid of missionary writings not be an extension of the sin that warranted Noah's curse on his son? Might it not be a way of mocking God as dumb while celebrating the missionaries as possessed with all the faculties of writing, reading and speech and so on? Is humanity not suffering a curse due to this centuries old presumption of speechlessness of God that is celebrated in the churches? Is humanity not suffering the violence of absence of God's unmediated voice or speech? Did the missionaries not presuppose the death of God thesis in Nietzsche's 'Gay Science' (Bubbio, 2015; Lalka, 2005; Nietzsche, 2001) in their presumptions that God had become speechless? If missionaries brought perceptions of speechless God to Africans, what implications did this have for the speech of Africans themselves in the (post)colonial context? How could the missionaries have been bringing Godly light without the concomitant Godly speech to the so called 'dark continent'? Were they not reducing God to dumb nature in the logics of the speechless Big Bang that had to wait centuries for scientists to speculate and write about it? Were the missionaries and the scientists not sacrificing God's speech so as to ensure the success of the colonial project?

Why is it that empire, that has rendered African ancestors, prophets and God speechless, continues to defy death by multiplying the mediums via which it speaks and acts in the world? Defying social death (Kankonde, 2010; Orlando, 1985; Sweeting *et al*, 1997), empire uses African academies as mediums for its ideologies and policies and often perpetrating symbolic violence on African cultures and societies. Empire also defies death when it uses African individuals as mediums for its ideologies, spiritualities and policies; as well as when it uses technologies as mediums or as its extensions in the world. Empire has endeavoured to defy social death by keeping memories alive among its former colonies via the giving of loans, by operating transnational corporations, by operating international financial institutions. Unfortunately along with these, empire has retained its parasitic relations on the post-colonies that it often assuages via imperial ideologies of emancipation which in fact mask empire's responsibility for the emaciation of Africans.

Thus, at independence, empire simply became an invisible parasite, an invisible absence presence competing with African ancestors for rituals of appeasement and memorialisation. Ritual invocations performed for instance every time Africans call one another by the names of ancestors of empire have come to replace African ancestral names. Rituals of memorialisation and invocation of empire are performed every time Africans frame their lives in terms of divisive imperial ideologies many of which account for African conflicts (Gerard *et al*, 2015). While Africans are aware of the divisiveness of imperial ideologies that are as viral as they are vile; ignoring the ideologies invites imperial vengeance and curses for failing to memorialise and appease empire, and for failing to perform such rituals on its behalf. Thus, even as impoverished disinherited Africans, harassed not only by after effects of enslavement and colonialism but also by neoliberal virus, have failed to perform rituals in honour of their ancestors, empire expects them on threats of vengeance to perform rituals in the name of imperial ideologies and vitalities. Empire has become a religion, – a civil religion (Bella *et al*, 1980; Beiner, 2010) – keen to have humans and nature, witness contemporary scholarly preoccupation with animation, worshipping its might on threat of vengeance. Thus, instead of being God's

multitude, humans and nature are increasingly becoming empire's multitude, in Hardt and Negri's (2000) sense.

Insights from anthropologists are, as Palgi *et al* (1984: 388-9) note, that naming the new born child after the dead leads to reanimation or resurrection of the deceased; it pacifies the deceased and returns him/her to life. But then, I argue here that naming children after the deceased does not necessarily pacify the dead if they always want to eat more than their share in the world of the living. Other scholars such as Van Gennep (1960: 160) write, "Persons for whom funeral rites are not performed are the most dangerous dead. They would like to be reincorporated into the world of the living and since they cannot be, they behave with hostility. They lack the means to subsistence which the other dead find in their own world and consequently must obtain them at the expense of the living." Thus, as Palgi *et al* (1984: 395, 405) contend, societies have mechanism to control the anger of the deceased and channel it along non-destructive paths as a way to realising the living's own ideals of harmonious existence. Otherwise the dead would want to return to the living or at least prod the living to leave their bodies behind and follow the dead to the spirit world, that is to join them as spectres.

African bodies have for long been subjects of violence from enforced fasting and possession by absence presences that demand African self-immolation and other forms of sacrifice even as the sacrifices are deemed to belong to the past. In order to force Africans to submit to possession and sacrifice, they are denied the means of subsistence; they are starved and afflicted until they accede to being possessed (Bourdillon, 1987; Sue *et al*, 2013; Friedson, 1996); that is they are subjected to regiments of 'emaciation' in order to get 'emancipation' which is purportedly realisable only for those who agreed to be possessed. Colonial regimes included the burning of African huts, granaries, the looting of land and livestock designed to force Africans to sacrifice to empire's needs; to agree to be treated as possessions or slaves of empire (Iliffe, 1990; Schmidt, 1992). Imperial songs of civilisation and development were not meant to emancipate but to emaciate Africans. Rendering the other vulnerable is a way of enhancing an 'ethics of vulnerability' (see Levinas, 2001; 2003); it is a way of controlling the other by withholding and destroying their

means of subsistence, possessing them and sacrificing them. But this ethics of sacrifice is often concealed. Thus, when it wants to underdevelop Africa, the empire preaches development, when it wants to render Africans vulnerable it preaches individual human security minus state security, when it wants to savage others empire preaches civilisation instead, and when it wants to emaciate Africans it preaches emancipation instead. When it wanted to bring the darkness of poverty and underdevelopment to Africa, empire preached enlightenment. When it wants to have freeplay in other countries affairs, empire preaches the need to obey the invisible hand of the market, which is in fact empire's own invisible hand. When it wants to have control over Africa, it preaches the rule of law which as Mattei *et al*, (2008) argue is in fact imperial rule for purposes of plunder.

The challenge is that western epistemologies that privilege ocularcentrism, the ontologically visible present have assisted scholarship and the rest of Africans in failing to conceive things beyond their immediate local hills. In spite of the existence of the invisible global imperial matrices of power that frame African politics (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013), empire is as eager as were colonial missionaries to summarily condemn and demonise Africans even if violence is arising from the foisted irrelevance of imperial political ideologies. Thus, scholars need to consider when a problem becomes African: there is need to consider whether a problem is an African problem simply because it is happening in Africa. There is need to distinguish between African problems and problems occurring in Africa; there is thus need to distinguish between South African problems and problems occurring in South Africa; between Zimbabwean problems and problems occurring in Zimbabwe; and, between Kenyan problems and problems occurring in Kenya, among others. There is need to notice that some problems attributed to Africa are broader than the continent and emanate from the empire that plays games of spectral absence presence while being careful to always conflate its own problems including curses with the post-colonies. Empire has experience in delivering subjects into its matrix of power by means of violence including of privation and deprivation including colonial and neoliberal privatisation: the (neo-)imperial

imperatives of planetary domination make it profitable for empire to use violence covert or overt, direct or indirect to deliver the world into its hands; so it has to foment violence, whether in the name of humanitarianism or fighting terrorism, while retaining an air of patrimonial and patriarchal benevolence across the world.

The covertness of empire's violence of absence depends on the success of its project to exhort postcolonial subjects to focus on the 'here and now'; such success is essential to erase the histories of looting, exploitation and enslavement of the postcolonial subjects; it depends on the success of empire in making Africans see as much problems among themselves as possible so that they keep on barking against one another and remain without opportunities to unite and demand what empire has made off with despite African independence. Epistemologies that privilege the readily ontologically present, the 'here and now,' disable Africans from cognising the violence of absence, including by those that made off with debts some of whom have increasingly started singing incessant songs about corruption in and by postcolonial African leaders that they have co-opted. Since the colonial era, Africa has suffered not only the violence of presence but also the violence of absence as colonists made off with whatever loot they could from Africa. Africa suffered the violence of presence of colonial occupation, of forced labour, of expropriations of land and livestock, of cultural imperialism, of repressive education and proselytised colonial religions (Van Onselen, 1980; Arrighi, 1970; Posselt, 1935). And, as a corollary, Africa suffered the colonially induced violence of absence of land, of livestock, of security, of religion, of education, of culture and of human essence. Since independence, Africa is suffering violence of absence in the sense of absence of reparation, compensation and restitution for historical injustices by empire that decided to make off without addressing these issues. As if that is not enough, the empire that formerly withdrew at independence without restitution, reparation and compensation, has continued to play the role of absent presence in Africa casting spells of sanctions and badly concocted toxic (neo-)liberal policies that like the spell of a malicious ghost continue to presume and visit the violence of absence in Africa.



The logics of the violence of absence can be best explained in terms of a looter who advises his/her [intended] victims to focus on the 'here and now' and not search everywhere including distant spatial and distant temporal locations for their looted property. It is akin to victims of looting being advised not to look up and down and sideways for the looted assets but to just focus on the 'here and now'; and just in case the victims do not obey the injunction to focus on the 'here and now,' the looter decides to cast as many perplexing problems as possible close to the victims' feet to keep attention stuck to the 'here and now'. Meanwhile the looter hopes that the mere effluxion of time will prescribe and expiate the offence. Victims are advised by those that owe them reparations to focus on specific durations of time; they are denied depth of history in order to induce in them amnesia; their cultures and the memory in it are always attacked, in the avowed name of inconsistency with human rights, even if the culture renders not only human dignity but memories with which to reclaim the dignity of ownership of property lost.

Alternatively focusing on the 'here and now' means that the victims, of imperial spectral absence presences, that are not allowed to look beyond their immediate horizons will instead accuse one another within their localities in the mistaken belief that it is only the immediate visible present others, the kith and kin, that commit the crimes and cause disappearance of their vessels of salvation. As a result of obedience to the commandment to focus on the 'here and now,' they conduct witchfinding [whether by manipulation of sticks as in conventional divination or by manipulation of figures as in statistical divination] targeting one another. Meanwhile empire looks on, cheers up on the local [variants of witchfinding] conflicts and takes opportunities to loot more while fighting happens between those obeying and wearing one another up on the basis of the 'here and now' injunction. In other words the injunction to focus on the 'here and now' entails that it is only those that are found present on the scene, including on the continent, of looting that are considered culpable, even if it is only because they are present. Thus, the temptation, with a focus on the ontologically present, is to smash or at least consider culpable anything and anyone found present on the continent of the crime. This is similar to the case of impatient hounds

that, when they have missed the hare, dissipate their energies barking up the wrong trees more because the trees are present than because the trees are culpable. There are therefore complex issues about presence absence that cannot be sufficiently addressed on the basis of simplistic ontologies and epistemologies that privilege the ocularcentric [ever]-present and [ever]-absent.

But arguing for paying attention to absence presence does not necessarily amount to dismissing the present and the absent since even in indigenous knowledge such as of the Shona people of Zimbabwe there are notions of the present and absent. The Shona for instance address God as an everpresent *mutangakugara* (the first one to live/stay). In this vein, they conceive *Mwari* as *vakagara variko* (God has been always present in Africa and the world generally) even though other entities and things come and go. The point here is that in analysing problems of violence in Africa there is need not to be preoccupied with rendering the African present culpable because doing so diverts attention from spectres of absence presence that haunt Africa through spooky appearances that often defy representation. It is important for scholars to remember that one of the reasons why some Africans got cheated by colonists is that they heeded colonists' demonisations of what was present in Africa. Demonisation and destruction of what was present in Africa started in the early colonial period and although empire couched it as civilisation and emancipation, such destruction and demonization of Africa has not served to liberate Africans from imperial grip. Colonisation occurred on the basis of demonising and destroying the African present in order to replace it with absence that would legitimise the presence of empire. The subsection below retraces how empire evangelised absence in order to legitimise its presence in Africa.

### **Evangelising existence of absence while creating the very absence in Africa: Retracing the duplicity of Empire**

Evangelisation of absence of God in Africa was coupled with evangelisation of absence of distinctions between Africans and animals/nature; it was also coupled with evangelisation of absence of

knowledge and civilisation. As Nyamnjoh (2015) observes, evangelisation has not been restricted to missionary activities but there is also evangelisation in scholarship that privileges conversion over conversation; scholarship that privileges saving situations over rigorous contemplation and debates. Evangelisation is also evident in a world where increasingly frightening statistics about Africa and the Global South are deliberately generated by (neo-)imperial moral entrepreneurs in order to create moral panics to persuade the world to adopt their envisaged plans for transformation (Ben-Yehuda, 1986). However, claiming absence whether of God, of civilisation, of order or of [representational] knowledge (see Stelladi, 2000; Griffen, 2007) has historically served to legitimise the (neo-)colonial presence of those claiming the existence of such absence in Africa. While every culture or society has aspects that are representational and nonrepresentational, the (neo-)colonial epistemic violence was premised on indiscriminate claims of absence of rationality, claims of irrationality, now renamed nonrepresentationalism and nonfoundationalism, of African epistemologies and life. Claiming that African epistemologies were irrational modalities of witchfinding served to legitimise suppressing African modes of knowing (Mittlebeeler, 1976). It also served as a cultural bomb to annihilate Africans' confidence in their heritages, unity, capacities and identities (Ngugi waThiongo, 1986).

Claiming absence while creating the absence is one (neo-)colonial duplicitous strategy that is useful for perpetuating the violence of absence in Africa that has historically been sadly considered devoid of human occupation and ownership. Privileging hybridity in Africa and purity in the west perpetuates the logics of emptiness and violence of absence; it is another way of derogating and denigrating Africans as not present and therefore as inconsequential on the continent as well as in the world. Claiming nonrepresentationalism in Africa presupposes logics of emptiness and absence similar to those that legitimised colonial expropriations and lootings: it presupposes absence of African [representational and therefore identifiable] human essence in a similar way that legitimised the violence of enslavement and colonial holocausts. Similarly claiming flatness, immanence and absence of transcendental spiritual, political, social

and cultural structures of the Africans presupposes the logics of (neo-)colonial disregard of African structures.

Thus (neo-)colonists have claimed absence of [orderly] political structures in Africa as a way to legitimise their presence as colonisers. Colonists have claimed absence of food in Africa even as they engaged in burning African granaries and huts (Iliffe, 1990) so as to force Africans to submit themselves to colonisation. Westerners have claimed absence of writing and literacy among precolonial Africans even as the westerners destroyed African precolonial libraries and museums. Westerners have claimed absence of technology and modernity among Africans even as colonists pre-empted African industries and modernity (Taiwo, 2010; Chirikure, 2010; Ellert, 1984). Thus, colonists claimed absence of law and order in Africa even as they created disorder by destroying African institutions that guaranteed the order (Posselt, 1935). To legitimise violence on Africans, empire portrayed the Devil as immanent in Africa, and God as immanent in the West.

While philosophers and theorists inspired by phenomenology and deconstructionism (Gough, 2004) portray transcendentalism and hierarchy as inherently oppressive, Africans suffered (neo-)colonial violence on the pretext of immanence of the Devil among them. Africans and the Global South more generally still suffer sanctions and 'collateral' violence (Prontzos, 2004; Gono, 2008) on the pretext that there are Devils among them. Equally, though such theorists and philosophers inspired by deconstructionism detest transcendentalism that is seen as oppressive, immanence cannot be an alternative liberatory trajectory for Africa. Africans that were considered by colonists to have no notions of a Transcendental Heavenly God, rather portrayed as believing in animism and in the immanence of spirits in every object of nature (Frazer, 1926). What this entails is that violence is neither located in transcendental structures nor in immanence but it is located in individuals who hide behind transcendence and immanence as they haunt others with harm. Though other scholars locate violence in science, in the binaries that it sets as foundations of its epistemology and thus propose antidotes of anti-foundationalism or post-foundationalism (see Marchat, 2007; Gough, 2004), it is paradoxical to blame foundationalism for such

violence at least in relation to Africa. For Africa violence is explicable in terms of absence of cultural, familial, marital, social, economic, political and spiritual African foundations that explained the hospitable reception and treatment of Europeans when they first travelled to Africa (Nhemachena, 2015). Thus for Africa, there is violence of absence; the problem is not invariably with the present or presence of African foundational institutions, it is with their absence and their being absent. The problem of current endemic violence in Africa is not invariably with science because even precolonial Africans also had their science. Equally while some scholars tend to blame violence on religious fundamentalism or terrorism, the problem cannot be blamed on religions because Africans had their religions also but they did not colonise others on the basis of those religions. The problem is as much with individuals and groups that hide behind these institutions to haunt others with violence as it is with those that engage in smear campaigns to legitimise destroying the institutions of others in the hope of creating absence, exposure and eventually vulnerability to external manipulation.

The challenge of uncritically demonising the African societies, cultures, epistemologies, religions and politics for violence, while ignoring the violence that their absence ushers, is that sometimes analysts reduce themselves to condemning the 'tools' and or 'instruments' even if the result is that they miss the individuals or groups behind the tools. In fact condemning epistemologies, societies, states, cultures, religions and politics for violence presupposes that the institutions are themselves animate-it is to engage in the animism that Western scholars have historically attributed to non-western societies. To uncritically condemn institutions while missing, deliberately or not, the individual architects hiding behind them is to yield for the perpetrators the camouflage they have sought behind the institutions. It amounts to the illogicality of a traffic police officer who would render a vehicle culpable in order to fail to apprehend the driver, or the illogicality of a scholar who considers the book culpable of grammatical errors so as not to apprehend the author for the faults. In other words, while scholars, analysts and commentators have tended to condemn and or attribute power to the market, to globalisation, to social media and

so on, such condemnation and or attribution of power amounts to western epistemological fetishism meant to exculpate the authors and those who exercise their power while hiding behind those institutions.

The paradox of western epistemologists is that while westerners take the pleasure to animate invisible noncorporeal institutions, render them culpable and thus take camouflage behind the institutions, they are impatient with Africans who in their epistemologies sometimes attribute violence to invisible malevolent spirits. Apart from this paradox is the fact that westerners who are portrayed in some scholarship as individualists are not so individualistic when they hide their culpability behind self-created institutions. To camouflage perpetrators behind noncorporeal invisible institutions, scholars have been trained to animate and condemn colonialism and slavery instead of also apprehending individuals behind and benefiting from colonialism and enslavement of others. In its contemporary dictatorship and planetary violence the west hides behind the camouflage of the international, alias global, even when it is clear that the so called international and global institutions are driven by individuals in specific western countries. Thus, among others, western laws are renamed international law; western institutions using Western laws are renamed international courts and international financial institution.

The challenge is that the west has used its institutions from religion, education, politics, culture, societies, law, economies, technology and health to perpetrate violence on others that are summarily presumed to have absence of similar [own] institutions. And, while it uses its institutions to perpetrate violence, the empire uses the media to sensationalise only the direct visible violence materialising in the local scenes. The problem is further that the West presumes, via post-structuralist and anti-structuralist (Gough, 2004) pretensions, that because Western institutions have been structurally implicated in violence then the institutions of all other people in the world are also violent and should fall together with the Western ones. Similarly, they presume that because they are accused of colonialism and enslavement of other human beings then everybody is also a coloniser and slave-driver. From co-opting the African middleclass

to work as buffer zones for colonisers, to co-opting African political leaders into the violent imperial, alias global, bureaucracy of governance, empire is increasingly moving towards deploying technology and nature as its animated camouflage for imperial violence. Thus, in spite of the fact that nature has suffered implantations of landmines and the fact that human beings fighting one another hide behind it and take camouflage behind it, nature is being theorised as an actor just like human beings. In this regard, nature is arguably being theorised as a subject for purposes of deploying it in politics where its role as an imperial camouflage is deliberately under-theorised.

Although theories on inclusion are being popularised as new postcolonial trajectories against the violence of exclusion, the violence occasioned by pretensions of inclusion for purposes of camouflaging the other, for rendering the imperial other an absence presence, is hardly considered. As Rene Girard (1977) observes, the violence of sacrifice often require the process of drawing the victim closer [pretending to include the victim] before sacrificially killing it for the good of the sacrificers' own lives and that of their community members. Africans need to notice that they have always been included in empire, first as the enslaved, then as colonial subjects and now they are being included as postcolonial imperial subjects in a context where they have very little control over their histories, present and futures that continue to be determined outside their ambits. Deprived of their legal systems, Africans continue to slave-drive one another, this time including their leaders and parents, to be executed in the (neo-)imperial (neo-)colonial courts under the impression that doing so amounts to freedom and emancipation. Deprived of their indigenous practices of singing for their ancestors, many Africans have been turned into neo-slave drivers impatient to engage in ritualised demonic chanting about their leaders and elders presumed to require culling by (neo-)slave owners. Forgetful of the fact that their leaders are forced by the imperial leviathan into (neo-)slave drivers, driving Africans into sweat shops of international corporations, Africans condemn only those they can see in their localities for the violence of those in absence. Unwary that inclusion in the imperial human rights and democracy regimes serves, not to

humanise and emancipate the impoverished but rather, to draw sacrificial victims closer before the sacrificial killings, Africans come to consider sacrifice as legitimate even if in the final analysis it does not materially improve their own conditions in the Global South but ties them closer to imperial depredations.

Thus while empire is careful enough to fight its wars in distant lands; true to the Shona proverb that *muroyi royeru kure kuti varipedyo vagokureverera* (a clever witch performs witchery far away from home so that neighbours will vouch for his/her innocence) empire has always used imperial bureaucracy and technology to clip the wings of Africans to ensure that they sacrifice one another for the purpose of appeasing not local gods but imperial gods. The imperial violence of sacrifice has always been cloaked as benevolence, as philanthropy including civility, development, change, human rights and democracy. The world is haunted by fundamentalism not only of orthodox religions but also the planetary imperial fundamentalism and sacrifice to spectres of civility, development, change, human rights and democracy. These spectres are minor deities serving the demigod of fundamentalist capitalist economy to which Africa has been sacrificed for centuries without respite. For Africa, the demons of poverty are not where missionaries and devoted pastors have trained us to look, they are located in absence presences more generally and besides we need to notice that no demon would keep stuck in one location and form when it knows fully well that it risks being found and exorcised.

Africans have sacrificed themselves in religious senses notwithstanding Africa's continued stagnation and they have sacrificed one another to empire in the name of human rights, democracy, development, change and so on only to witness material stagnation and privation. The question is: might Africans be sacrificing through the wrong gods and goddesses? Might it be because Africans are sacrificing to the imperial Darwinist god of violent competition and natural selection, which has rejected God? Might Africans be suffering the curse for (neo-)slave-driving one another to the (neo)imperial gods and goddesses that have mocked God by presenting him to the world as speechless.



Africans should get worried when each time they engage in sacrifice, the benefits fall on the other side of the fence whose inhabitants do not stop asking when next the Africans are going to sacrifice again. Encouraged to sacrifice in education, Africans have spent trillions of dollars in the academies that are as irrelevant for African development as they have failed to develop the continent; encouraged to sacrifice for purposes of neoliberal economic reforms, Africans have seen the benefits of their sacrifice fall on the other side of the fence; made to (neo-)slave-drive and sell one another, Africans have seen the benefits fall on the other side of the fence; mobilised to sacrifice their institutions including cultures, families, marriages, religions and spiritualities, politics, societies and economies Africans have seen the benefit fall on the other side of the fence. Sacrificing one another by embezzling funds and shipping it overseas, Africans have seen the benefits fall on the other side of the fence. Africans continue to sacrifice and export their fellows for execution in imperial, alias international courts, even if none from empire are shipped for execution through African courts; yet in spite of all these sacrifices benefits fall on the other side of the fence. Impunity is not simplistically a problem of those ontologically present in Africa but of the absence presence including empire, that has vanished at independence, transfiguring itself into contextless spectrality while insisting narrowly that impunity is a problem of the 'here and now' in Africa, of the ontologically and locally present.

## **Conclusion**

In the end, analyses of violence in Africa have to transcend narrow immediate horizons if there is to be adequate diagnosis and therapy; the analyses have to trace violence of absences presences. They have to take into cognisance the (neo)colonial destruction of African socio-cultures of cohesion, (neo)colonial disruptions of African family, marital and spiritual cohesion all of which promoted the integration of individuals thereby preventing deviancy including violence that has made Euromodernity a paradigm of war (Maldonado-Torres, 2008). The analyses of violence have to take into consideration the violence of (neo-)colonial disinheritance followed

by the phenomena of deindustrialisation and unemployment all of which are inimical to exchanges necessary for marriage, family integration and rituals that integrate individuals in their communities, kin-groups and cosmologies. Apart from these aspects, it is necessary to consider the restlessness of the African dead who suffered enslavement; colonial exploitation and looting yet remain unmourned. It has been argued that though empire evangelises on change, it does not want Africans to change the imperial status quo or reverse the tables of planetary hegemony. The chapter has also argued that there is little scholarly notice of ways in which empire creates absences in Africa as means by which to justify its own presence, even if spectral. Empire thus is culpable for some of the violence of absence that it would want the African present to be convicted of. Empire simply substituted itself for precolonial gods and goddesses only that empire has increasingly come to draw sacrificial victims from the entire planet, particularly in the peripheries.

While empire has historically condemned the Africans and their institutions for problems in Africa, this chapter has argued that the problem is also located elsewhere. It has been argued that while some scholars explain violence on the basis of the foundationalism and representationalism in some epistemologies, the problem in Africa is explicable in terms of absence of what has historically united Africans. While other scholars argue for deconstructing social institutions, kinship systems, families, marriages and cultures, it has been argued here that it is in fact the absence of such social bonds that explains violence in Africa. The chapter has posed the question why even as it rejected its own gods and goddesses for meddling in human affairs, with the enlightenment, the West foisted names of its rejected gods and goddesses on Africans. The issue then is whether it is not the presence of these rejected meddling gods and goddesses in Africa that explain the endemic violence that cannot even be quelled through African traditional rituals. The other point made is that violence in Africa cannot simplistically be explained in terms of the present whether present African governments, present African judiciary, African legislatures, African militarisation, African culture and social institutions. Every society, nation state has its

government, military, judiciary, legislature, culture and institutions: what differs is that Africa has been colonially dismembered and rendered fractious by imperial (neo-)colonial absence presences that need to be addressed to stem violence on the continent. Africa has carried the burdens of empire for centuries; it continues to suffer culpability for the imperial violence of absence and this violence of absence materialises in local visible violence that we have been unfortunately trained to focus on.

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### War without End? Terrorism, Policy and Conflict Management in Africa

*Thomas Fox*

#### Introduction

Sub-Saharan East and West African states are facing increasingly prevalent degrees of religion-inspired insurgent violence chiefly grounded in radical groups with loyalties to conservative forms of Islam, although Africa has a long history of conflict between Muslim and Christian. In the last two decades West Africa and the Horn of Africa have experienced new and devastating levels of conflict which threaten to escalate and spread beyond currently affected nations in the region, and potentially further south to South Africa with its own significant Muslim population. This problem may be said to have first seriously manifested itself with the simultaneous bombings of the United States Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania on 7 August 1998. These were well-planned and unique compared with previous incidents, epitomising an emergence in Sub-Saharan Africa of what is now widely termed 'terrorism'. The August attacks were lethal. More than 213 Kenyan citizens died in Nairobi, 4,000 were wounded and mutilated, with 12 American fatalities. In Dar es Salaam, 11 Tanzanians perished and 85 were injured. Initially, the perpetrators behind the bombings were unknown, but a Libyan al-Qaeda operative using the pseudonym of Abu Anas al-Libi emerged as the mastermind.

The events of 1998 may be seen as a distinct historical marker leading directly to the current challenges of resurgent Islamic-inspired security problems. Any perception that the attacks represented a significant turning point was not immediately apparent to the public or policy makers, who awoke surprisingly slowly to a worrying and increasingly virulent phenomenon in their midst. Political leaders in Kenya and Tanzania were at first able to write off

the events as ‘one-off’ and the causes as due to external factors and outside agents. However, since then, mainly indigenous citizens rather than foreigners have been implicated in a growing number of new incidents, most with strong affiliation to clandestine support networks in and beyond their immediate territory. Islamic violence has intensified both in Kenya and Tanzania and now much further afield across Africa. By 2016 several African states had been drawn into spiralling Islamic linked violence including Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, Niger and Benin, all being forced into costly military responses. This has been accompanied by retaliatory attacks by Christian and other communities against Muslim populations who they blame for fomenting the violence. As a result, intercommunal unrest along religious lines is now not uncommon, with East and West Africa potentially matching the severe problems of Islamic-linked conflict experienced in the states north of the Sahara. In line with this contention, Africa may be facing serious levels of terrorism comparable to the security experiences of Europe and the United States which seem to defy solution and a permanent resolution.

The amorphous concept of terrorism needs brief clarification. Laqueur’s (1987: 143) classic definition says that:

Terrorism is the use or the threat of the use of violence, a method of combat, or a strategy to achieve certain targets... [I]t aims to induce a state of fear in the victim, that is ruthless and does not conform with humanitarian rules... [P]ublicity is an essential factor in the terrorist strategy.

Terrorism does not distinguish between soldier or civilian, and the latter are more commonly the soft targets of terror in its aim to disrupt society and force governments to make concessions to radical militant group demands. Africans have a long aversion to the term given that liberation movements across the continent during the anti-colonial struggles were frequently labelled as ‘terrorist’ by colonial authorities (Allison 2015). However, the rise of Islamist-linked

insurgencies, or insurgencies that claim links with Islam, has revived the term in recent years and it is now widely used.<sup>1</sup>

Low to medium levels of terrorism had been growing in the African region well-before the 1998 events in Kenya and Tanzania, with nearly 10,000 cases being recorded across the Sub-Sahara between 1970 and 2013 (University of Maryland 2014). Failure of a collective African governmental response before and immediately after many of the more serious incidents, including those of 1998, point to the dangers of permitting an entrenchment of what might initially be manageable political problems which then come to be neglected, and later prove intractable. The Nairobi Westgate Mall and Garissa University College attacks of 2013 and 2015, respectively, taking hundreds of lives, are recent prominent examples of where the absence of an effective and coordinated regional counter-response may lead. Al-Shabaab (meaning The Youth), an al-Qaeda affiliate responsible for these more recent assaults on Kenyan civil society and state, and Boko Haram operating in Nigeria and among its neighbours, have effectively been allowed to establish themselves and flourish. In addition, the states where they operate have tended to experience significant radicalisation of sectors of their population or of some Islamic sects practically unnoticed, and this has provided much of the local recruitment for al-Shabaab and Boko Haram. This does not bode well for future security across Africa. Terrorism can be said to be the most serious threat to peace and stability in contemporary Africa with current African Union counter-terrorism measures considered not to be working (Allison 2016; Elu and Price 2015).

This chapter discusses the causes of this regional security threat in relation to Islamist conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa. It focuses on the processes of the emergence of well-structured and ideologically driven (and violent) radical Islamist social movements, first in Somalia with the birth of al-Shabaab, then its export to Kenya and

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<sup>1</sup> This is not to equate the beliefs and practices of adherents of Islam automatically with Islamic inspired acts of terror. Practitioners of the Islamic faith are generally speaking no more responsible for terrorism than Christians are for the actions of violent Christian zealots in movements such as the Ugandan Lord's Resistance Army (Kisiangani 2011).

Tanzania. The case of Somalia and its so-called ‘state failure’ is regarded as an important and substantial element in the seeding and subsequent acceleration of political terror in Africa, although not its sole cause. Boko Haram, from 2002 a West African threat in Nigeria and beyond, is treated as having a separate development path compared to East African terror groups. As will be shown, socio-political conditions, frequently ethnic and religious in character, were important preconditions that shaped several conflicts that later emerged. The growth and evolution of home-grown as opposed to ‘foreign’ terror groups is scrutinised, along with state responses to them.

The final part of the discussion will be policy orientated around an assessment of the effectiveness of counter-terrorism measures. While the Organisation of African Unity and its later transmorphed successor, the African Union, have debated and established various counter-terror declarations such as the Algiers Convention on the Prevention and Combatting of Terrorism (1991), the Dakar Declaration against Terrorism (2001), the Algiers Plan of Action on the Prevention and Combatting of Terrorism (2002), and the subsequent Addis Ababa Protocol (2004), specific measures have not always successfully focused on addressing root causes of terrorism (Allison 2015). Somalia, in some respects Africa’s Vietnam, has never sufficiently been regarded as a key initiator and seedbed for much of East and West Africa’s security/terrorist problems. The African Union and directly affected member states have tended to focus on short-term solutions to terrorist insurgency by treating it as something to be militarised or policed. This has been at the expense of a more long term amelioration that might focus on matters of alienation and political and economic exclusion of certain religious communities, or alternatively, on why some Muslims are today so attracted to extreme forms of radical political Islam (Rosand, Millar and Ipe 2007).

## **Interrogating Islam and Islamism**

‘Islam’ in Arabic literally means ‘a state of submission,’ and a Muslim is someone who has submitted to God. As a world religion,



Islam was first established in the Arabian Peninsula (now Saudi Arabia) in the first third of the 7<sup>th</sup> Century under the Prophet Mohammed. It rapidly spread beyond its heartland through a combination of proselytising, migratory movements, and rapid conquest by the armies of Islam. This military side, present from its beginning, established something of a militant-romantic tradition which continues to attract radical conservative Muslims who see themselves as protecting, saving or redeeming their religion from contemporary modernising interpretations. This militant aspect tends to emerge where Islam is perceived to be under threat from other religions or nations, or when Islamic territories are invaded or occupied, as in the case of the American-led incursions into Afghanistan and Iraq in 2001 and 2003 (Hiro 2002). Jihad or ‘struggle’ is a term that typifies this defence of the religion, although radical Islamists have extended or distorted its meaning to include violent all-out holy war, while for Westerners and their governments it is often unreflectively synonymous with the so-called ‘terrorist threat’. Yet jihad can be understood both as an inner spiritual struggle to purify or better the self, and as cleansing and improvement of corrupt public institutions in pursuit of equality and perfection (Qureshi 2016). In the context of terrorism, passivism or reforming principles have been lost. The term ‘terrorism’ is retained in this discussion as it is a widely used and well-established working concept which describes many contemporary violent events and contexts.

The phenomenon of radical and violent Islam is complex, and any dialogue regarding its causality and growth is innately controversial and inevitably incomplete (Cilliers 2015). The term ‘Islamism’ is regularly deployed in Africa and internationally as a label to describe adherents of Islam who pursue radical or violent means to propagate or defend their faith. It is synonymous with ‘Islamic activism,’ the assertion and promotion of beliefs, prescriptions, laws, or policies that are held to be Islamic in character.<sup>2</sup> In Western discourse the term is often conflated with ‘Islamic fundamentalism’ or ‘political Islam,’ and it has been described as “a religious ideology with a holistic interpretation of Islam whose final aim is the conquest

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<sup>2</sup> International Crisis Group Report no. 37 (March 2005). Brussels. p.2

of the world by all means” (Mozaffari 2007: 22). This definition might be presenting some of the implicit overarching aims of some Islamists rather too bluntly, and misses the key primary motivations of the ‘Islamists’. Haqqani and Fradkin (2007: 14) state these as:

The repudiation of the accumulated historical tradition of Islam on the grounds that this tradition actually constitutes a species of corruption which has distorted the pure and original meaning and practice of Islam as both a religious and a political phenomenon. A second element (the corollary of the first) was the desire to restore Islam’s original purity by embracing the example of its founding generation, the so-called Salaf as-Salih, or “virtuous ancestors.” Salafis, as adherents of this view may still serviceably be called, aimed to achieve a reintegration of religion and politics whose most obvious feature would be the governance of life through the full application of *shari’a* (Islamic law).

Islamists therefore seek the purification of their religion through the merger of Islam, politics and state under Islamic principles. But societal transformation must also be part of this in line with religious change, presumably because a purified religion will result in a purified society. In this sense, as Mozaffari (2007) states, Islamism represents three pillars of a religious trinity which combines *Dîn* (Religion), *Dunya* (Way of life) and *Dawla* (Government). Islamists believe that ‘correct’ versions of the religion should influence political systems absolutely. This points to Islamism as intrinsically a political ideology to rival Communism or Fascism, reflecting elements of these where they promote community and collectivism, equality and eradication of institutional corruption; but not, as in the case of Fascism, with any semblance of nationalism. Islam is in principle internationalist (like Communism) and above the confines of the nation-state, being grounded in the concept of *umma* or community of believers (Schwartz 2009). Muslims distinguish themselves from non-Muslims in this respect, while Islamists tend to insist that the faith must be asserted or extended to others either peacefully or by violent means. The preferred definition here is that ‘Islamism’ represents the belief

that Islam should guide social and political as well as personal life, and adherents may pursue this by any means including conflict, or alternatively through non-violent courses of action. This variant incorrectly asserts a religious and political compulsion despite the canonical standpoint that the Holy Quran or Koran teaches that there should be no compulsion (Harris and Nawas 2015). Islamism must therefore be seen as a dualism between conservatives who, in the pursuit of a purified religion and society, denounce violence, and those radical Islamists who assert religious-political purification by any conceivable means. The terms 'radical' or 'political' Islam are therefore preferred in the discussion to denote violent or 'terrorist' variants of the Islamic tradition. Radical Islamists oppose Islamic 'modernists' who would reform the traditional foundations of the religion, just as much as it would challenge Westerners, Christians or other group outside the *umma* (Masud 2011).

Islam itself is not monolithic, but represents several strands and variants. Shiaism emerged soon after the founding of the religion, to challenge Sunnism on fundamental points of belief such as who may govern or interpret the Quran correctly. Shias thought that only those in line of descent from the founder Mohammed could rule, and clerics' interpretation of the Quran was final; while Sunnis believed that only the most able leader should be chosen, and that caliphs or clerics were fallible interpreters of religious doctrine (Ayubi 1993). Sunnism gives greater scope for bending or revising the hermeneutic meaning of religious texts than Shiaism, thereby allowing for potentially open and radical interpretations, a fact not lost on many terrorist groups who tend to favour Sunnism and oppose Shiaism. Al-Qaida and Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) vehemently condemn Shia versions of Islam to the point where no distinction is made between the killing of Shias and Westerners or Christians. However, this is not to make a general argument that Sunnis are by definition 'terrorists'. In fact, the Sunni tradition has in modern times been far less orthodox and more open to reform than other versions (Ruthven 2004). On the other hand, Sufism took a mystificatory route by being 'other-worldly' seeing participation in worldly affairs as a distraction from true involvement with God, similar to Buddhism and Hinduism with which it fused during the Islamic

conquests of north India in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. While Sufism later abandoned this apolitical distancing and embraced state power, its original ideas to some extent continue among some sects including Ahmadi or Qadianist Muslims who avoid involvement in politics and preach non-violence and tolerance of other faiths (Harris and Nawas 2015). The influence of Wahhabism<sup>3</sup> and its impact on current fundamentalist thinking and religious action, including terrorism, is another matter.

Wahhabism seeks to unite religion and state by infusing statehood policy and practice with its own interpretation of religious ideology. It preaches the idea of Islamic rule in absolute terms. This is the opposite of the Western state model which since the Enlightenment<sup>4</sup> insisted on and maintained a separation of church and state, a position adopted by many African states after independence from colonialism. Traditionally, Islam shuns involvement with state power to the point where some argue that it lacks a theory of the state because a Muslim internationalist *umma* contradicts the possibility of the nation (McGovern 2007). However, Wahhabism denies this, insisting on the centrality of religion ‘guiding’ a well-grounded state and politics in a totalist fashion. This establishes a civil state religion that controls every corner of social and secular space. There is no moderation in Wahhabism which uses *Sharia* law to strictly enforce its decrees (Qureshi 2016; McGovern 2007). Other sects are harshly condemned as ‘non-Muslim,’ other religions as false and idolatrous. Wahhabists, similar to Salafists who

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<sup>3</sup> Wahhabism was first established by a Sunni Muslim Muhammad ibn Abul al-Wahhab (1703-87) born in Najd, in what is now Saudi Arabia. He was a puritan zealot who opposed what he regarded as lax observance of Islamic rites, pronounced as *bida* or forbidden by God. Wahhab promoted jihad or holy war against offenders and apostates. Violence was considered a normal and acceptable means to purify and promote Islam, including opposing other religions and converting them to his narrow version of Islam. Al-Wahhab is revered as second only to Mohammed by his followers (Hiro 2002).

<sup>4</sup> The European Enlightenment Movement of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century which culminated in the French Revolution of 1789-1796, led to the emergence of Western liberal thought and Socialism, with liberalism establishing itself as the dominant form of intellectual thinking. It spawned ideas of citizenship, democracy, civil rights and equality. Central to its ideas was the assertion that religion must be separated from involvement in state and politics absolutely.

also pursue a fundamentalist form of Islam, regard themselves as the only divinely guided community of true-believers, others being viewed as apostates deserving severe punishment. Ultimately, modern Wahhabists and Salafists seek the restoration of the Caliphate as a central source of Muslim authority, much the same as the Pope oversees Catholics, but with considerably more political authority and control (Hiro 2002).

Saudi Arabia itself was forged as a Wahhabi state by Abdul Aziz, later King, of the House of Saud in 1932 following the successful conclusion of his war of conquest and unification of a variety of regional kingdoms and tribal units. This has been said to make it the world's oldest and first fundamentalist state (Hiro 1988). The new state found it difficult in practice to implement Wahhabism in its purest form and, as with any government seeking to function solely on ideological principles, found itself forced by real-world economic and political circumstances into a series of compromises. Yet the religious establishment set up by Aziz ensured that later leaders did not distort doctrine or stray too far toward secularism or modernisation. Even today the religious police, the *muttawin*, ensure the observance of Islamic practice on the streets and in public life more generally. *Sharia* courts prosecute and convict offenders. Religious authority enjoys more prestige and political influence than in any other Sunni state, although the political system and the monarchy to some extent temper and control extremist tendencies among clerics. However, tension exists between religious conservatism and the economic developmental needs of the nation to the point where the introduction of telephones, internet and even oil exploration and extraction has been condemned by Wahhabists who oppose modern technology as un-Islamic and even as works of the devil (Lacy 2010). This increasingly influential branch of the Muslim faith brings it close to radical forms of Islamism.

The most controversial aspect of Wahhabi ideology (and other conservative versions of Islam) is the way it strictly defines the role of women. This has stirred up fierce debate among reformist sectors of Islam as well as Western liberals. In Saudi Arabia and some other Muslim countries, women are forbidden to drive automobiles, to walk or travel in public without a close male relative, or to take

leadership positions. Women are expected to wear a *hijab* or *chador* to hide the body and all elements of sexuality. Unveiled women are labelled temptresses and subject to punishment by *Sharia*, and in this respect the identity of women is not their own. Veiling of women is portrayed as really being about the moral protection of men. Men must not be drawn into extramarital affairs as this will undermine the cornerstone of Muslim society, the family (Hiro 1989). Muslim feminist writers have stated that veiling is more about male patriarchal control than religion, and is incompatible with modern thinking and the Quran itself, which reveals an absence of the prescriptions Muslim men have come to impose on women (Mernissi 2011; Wadud 1999).

Wahhabism is prohibitive about the right of women to be educated, and education was formerly denied to women in Saudi Arabia, similar to Taliban Afghanistan where the prohibition today threatens to return. Many parts of Pakistan also tend to enforce such constraints. Men are widely regarded as emotionally and intellectually superior in Islam, and women's role is primarily confined to being wife and mother. Women's education, it is argued, should be confined solely to matters linked to family status (Al-Rasheed 2013). Some writers argue that Wahhabism has been misunderstood, and traditionally it respects and protects women (Wadud 1999). In Saudi Arabia women are active as writers, poets and medical practitioners, although conservatives regularly condemn even these concessions toward them (DeLong-Bas 2007). It could be argued that there exists a fine line between the protection of Muslim women, and control or compulsion. Yet it must be said that women are undeniably drawn to Islam and often freely embrace and accept the restraints placed on them as part of cultural and religious norms.

Huntington (1997) states that the reassertion of Islam in the third part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century is of considerable historic importance comparable to the European Protestant Reformation of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century due to its revolutionary character and consequences. He named this emergence of Muslim identity, thinking and confidence the 'Islamic Resurgence' (Huntington 1997: 109). This was to some extent driven by modernisation and development, and a revival of Islamic institutions and society. Rising wealth created a new middle-

class dissatisfied with Western materialism and values, while migration of poorer Muslims from rural areas to cities created personal needs for new belongings and roots. A reaffirmation of Islam filled this ontological space for all classes. This resurgence also had its role-model in the Shiite 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran which swept away a modernising Shah, and gave a conception to many Muslims, even to traditionally anti-Shiite Sunni Muslims, of what a 'pure' egalitarian Islamic state might look like as a better alternative to the previously dominant Saudi royalist hierarchical archetype. Afghanistan after the Taliban takeover in 1996 later presented a more exclusively Sunni Wahhabist Islamist state that was for many radicals preferable to the Shiite Iranian model. These revolutions have considerably stimulated the emergence of conservative strains of Islam across both the Middle-East and in East and West Africa (Kisiangani 2011).

For some Muslims, once the process of Islamisation has begun it becomes unstoppable and they may find it difficult to know when it must end. What is the perfect religious ideal to be attained in Muslim society, what must it look like, and how far should a state or the radical adherents of Wahhabi style Islam go to make it a reality? The 1990s saw the emergence of many violent independent Islamist groups, most infamously al-Qaeda, which had come to turn its back on what it regarded as corrupt fundamentalist states like Saudi Arabia, or apostate Shia states like Iran. Al-Qaeda was one of many radical groups that arose, and ISIS, Boko Haram and al-Shabaab stand in a line of direct descent from them. The process of Islamisation and Islamic rebirth which began in its Muslim heartlands has in recent years spread into Africa, to the bewilderment and, to some degree, paralysis or sluggish response of African governments. Africa may now be part of what has been called a 'war without end' (Hiro 2002: 374). How did this come about?

### **Seed-bedding terror: Consequences of Somali State failure**

Somalia emerged as pivotal in the entrenchment of radical Islamism in the Horn of Africa, and its subsequent export to neighbouring countries such as Kenya, Tanzania, and beyond to

Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon and Uganda. Somalian territory was strategically positioned due to its proximity to the Middle-East and the Horn of Africa. It quickly became a magnet and training ground for international terrorists, ideologically and ontologically attracted to jihadi causes. Some of the world's most dangerous and experienced terrorist groups, al-Shabaab and Boko Haram, were seeded there. The virtual collapse of the Somalian state in 1991 following a military *coup* against President Barre proved to be the catalyst for takeover by Islamist and other radical groups although the specific social preconditions were long before in place, contributing to the eventual splintering of both state and society (Healy 2015). Despite the fact that Somali citizens shared one religion and were demographically constituted into only six clans, there had been struggles over water, livestock and grazing rights long before it became a sovereign nation. The traditional legal system or *Herr* was formerly used to settle disputes under customary leaders, but began to break down during the political conflict under Barre, and thereafter (Menkhaus 2007). Clans became indistinguishable from militias, eventually competing for central state power and control of resources (Lewis 2002). The anarchy and state failure following the 1991 *coup* were a central promoting force for the subsequent entry and embedding of Islamic 'fundamentalism' in East and West Africa (De Waal 2015). Somalia rapidly became a training ground for both local and foreign Islamists.

From the start, there were unsatisfactory elements in the birth of the Federal Republic of Somalia in 1960, the chief flaw being the way national borders were agreed and established. Due to the influence of former colonisers such as France and Britain, the new map of the country left ethnic groupings and clans isolated in neighbouring countries, pushing the new state eventually into a collision course with Ethiopia and Kenya when the Somali government gave material support to Somali independence movements in those countries (Healy 2015). This rendered Somalia an expansionist state in the eyes of neighbours who worked from the start for its destabilisation, resulting in the Ogaden war with Ethiopia in 1977 in addition to numerous other skirmishes (Osman and Souare 2007). The *coup* against Barre in 1991 was engineered by Ethiopia working with anti-government rebel movements. In the subsequent absence of



effective central state power, rival warlord militias dominated the capital Mogadishu, while the rest of the country was largely neglected and left to fend for itself. Transitional governments came and went, with Kenya, Eritrea or Ethiopia backing rival factions based on respective national interests (Healy 2015). The American military intervention in 1992 may be seen as ill-advised despite its professed goal of famine relief, in that it sent a clear message that the United States now had a strategic interest in the country and the Horn of Africa generally. Following its Somalia withdrawal soon after, the United States established a permanent military base in the neighbouring Republic of Djibouti from which it continues to undertake covert operations and intelligence gathering. Somalia and its immediate geographic fringes were quickly seen by radical Islamists as a potential base of counter-operations against what was regarded as the Western 'invader' (Lyman 2014; Elmi 2010).

Emerging Somalian stability under the provisional government of 2004, significantly through the auspices of the Islamic Courts Union (ICU), was quickly undermined by the 2006 Ethiopian military intervention, nervous at the emergence of an Islamic government on its doorstep. The Ethiopian invasion was financially sponsored by the United States, to be followed the next year by the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) into Mogadishu where the ICU had seized power (Osman and Souare 2007). The AMISOM operation was heavily funded by the European Union, United Nations and the United States. These interventions did not result in any commitment to either the stability or the independence of the Somali state which became irrelevant in the face of policies to contain rather than eradicate radicalism, and sought security rather than genuine peacekeeping (Healy 2015; Mills and Fam 2013).

The failure to build effective indigenous government structures and the suppression of the ICU paved the way for a more radical body to emerge out of ICU, al-Shabaab, in 2007. Al-Shabaab, which was a Salafi jihadist Wahhabi group affiliated with al-Qaeda, had ambitions far beyond the former provincial concerns of the ICU. There is much evidence that "the structure and nature of regional engagement with Somalia has militated against the construction of a legitimate polity" (Healy 2015: 73). The effect has been to prevent

any enduring political settlement or stabilisation of Somalia, while the critical consequence is the entrenchment of terrorist groups who now fan the region beyond Somalia itself. Similarly, northern Mali has since 2013 become a safe haven and base of operations for al-Qaeda to attack the region, often working with African terror counterparts (Allison 2015). In March 2016, Somalia's President Ali Gas strongly criticised the presence and lack of effectiveness of the African Union's AMISOM force arguing that "They have stayed long without much to show for it. Their stay in Somalia is worthless." He called on the leaders and people of Somalia to rely on themselves in future stressing that the AMISOM security strategy was not serving the interest of Somalis, and must be terminated (Somali Current, 1 March 2016).

De Waal (2015) argues that a unique and academically neglected *political marketplace* operating in Somalia and the Horn of Africa must also be taken into account, as this militates against state stability and security. Political players use violence and war as a basis for maintaining or obtaining power and money; they and their client networks benefit from situations of chaos and conflict. This is more than the usual accusation of official corruption standing in the way of stability and peace. Rather, he is referring to systems of patronage, bargaining and accommodation by what he terms *political entrepreneurs*. He states that provisional allegiances between army officers (including AMISOM personnel), militia commanders, "tribal" chiefs and politicians, even members of terror groups, undermine state and nation-building efforts. At stake financially is access to oil money, development aid and resources supplied by the West for counter-insurgency and peacekeeping which leak into the political marketplace for trading purposes. His central argument for Somalia is that the United States' War on Terror and the so-called 'stabilising' military interventions by Kenya and Ethiopia fuel the political marketplace, and give influence, political power and financial enrichment to terrorists and their opponents alike.

## Kenya, Tanzania and Al-Shabaab

Kenya's descent into Islamist violence has been gradual and long-term, coinciding in recent years with impressive economic growth and material success, the undermining of which has become a priority for al-Shabaab. Terrorist incidents were fairly regular from the 1980s, although since 2000 they have taken on a quite different form. Al-Shabaab reached global notoriety for the attack on Nairobi's Westgate Shopping Centre in September 2013, killing 67 people. The target was not casually chosen as it was a symbol of Kenya's economic emergence, sending the signal that a single violent group could be capable of halting or reversing the nation's development, a message not lost on the government. The fact that the victims came from multiple nationalities was a reflection of the skilled business and technical personnel who had come with foreign investment as players in the economic transformation (Botha 2014). However, it was Kenya's military cooperation as part of the African Union's AMISOM force and its military intervention in southern Somalia from 2011 that has made it the target of al-Shabaab's wrath. Al-Shabaab has lost ground through these actions, and is retaliating with suicide attacks in Kenya, as well as against other countries involved in AMISOM operations such as Uganda (Cilliers 2015; Lyman 2014). Westgate came to be followed by further small and large-scale incidents including the soft targeting of Christians in remote locations away from military surveillance, notably but not confined to Lamu County. Educational institutions were not spared, being symbols of undesirable Western ideology. The 2015 assault on Garissa University College taking the lives of 148 students and leading to the abduction of 500 others was on an equivalent scale to Westgate. The abductees remained unaccounted for in 2016. Al-Shabaab is thought to have emerged in 2004 from a small group of militants in Somalia linked to the now defunct al-Itihad al-Islamia militia, and became prominent in the defence of the ICU government in 2006 against the Ethiopian invasion. It is the main force, consisting of some 15,000 fighters, opposing AMISOM (LeSage 2014).

In the past, Islamist inspired violence tended to be blamed on foreign radical groups and outside individuals. The Norfolk Hotel

and Kikambala Hotel bombings of 1980 and 2002 respectively which targeted mainly Israeli tourists, and the deadly 1998 attack on the American Embassy in Nairobi, were organised and carried out by foreign jihadists. However, the Westgate attackers were mostly indigenous Kenyan citizens. It is reasonable to suppose that al-Shabaab had decisively infiltrated Kenyan society with cells in Nairobi and in many parts of the country, including strongholds among Kenya's Muslim populations. Recently a new home-grown Kenyan group, al-Hijra or Muslim Youth Centre, has emerged with close links with al-Shabaab and terrorist networks in Somalia. It recruits young Kenyan Muslim men for al-Shabaab operations in Somalia from among the poor in the informal urban settlements. Somali refugees residing in the country at the Dadaab Refugee Camp in Garissa, home to over 300,000 people, are potential sources of recruitment, and Dadaab is viewed by the Kenyan government as a base for terrorists.<sup>5</sup> Both al-Shabaab and al-Hijra were implicated in the Westgate attack and many other incidents. These groups are skilled at exploiting ethnic, religious and political dissent, as well as successful dissemination of radical Muslim religious thinking and ideology through Islamic education institutes. The internet, with its ability to reach large audiences, is an influential recruiting tool in its provision of jihadi websites promising a combination of salvation and social redress for wrongs done to Muslims in exchange for recruitment into radical violent causes (Bertram 2014). Generally, the rapid spread of internet communication in Africa in the last decade, while providing opportunities for individuals to connect with the world for personal or social development, has been employed by others as a source for covert links to Islamists with radical missions (Bertram 2014).

Kenya is unfortunate in its close geographic proximity to Somalia, providing al-Shabaab with vital technical and material support and a safe haven of retreat when Kenyan military operations

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<sup>5</sup> The Kenyan government has announced plans to close Dadaab Camp by November 2016 for a combination of economic and security reasons, but mainly due to the perception that the camp is now an armed stronghold for al-Shabaab and al-Hijra. The occupants are planned to be repatriated back to Somalia (Reported on Aljazeera 3 June 2016).

against them are at their most intense. Continuing Somalian state destabilisation and failure remain a major source of Kenya's current insecurity. How have the Kenyan authorities responded to this growing security problem? Surveillance of radical Islamist and other groups has been put in place accompanied by arrests and prosecution of suspects. Nairobi has in 2016 a higher military presence than at any time in the past, and the army and police are active among those regions with dense Muslim populations. Around one third (15 million) of Kenyans are Muslim, being predominantly Shias and Ahmadi adherents. These are found in the eastern coastal areas and in the north-east close to the relatively open and porous border with Somalia. The north-east is regarded as an al-Shabaab stronghold, and military operations are at their most intense there, in turn inviting retaliatory and pre-emptive attacks on convoys and military targets. Local Muslim populations frequently complain of heavy-handedness and indiscriminate harassment by the army. Muslims also point to marginalisation from the political processes of regional and local representation and participation, with accusations of domination by 'outsiders'. Functionaries from Nairobi tend to control key positions of governance rather than indigenous elected leaders (Elu and Price 2015). This encourages some local support for al-Shabaab, and radical religious politics in general. Particularly controversial are the frequent assassinations of prominent radical Islamic clerics and leaders who openly preach jihadi holy war or philosophies of resistance for promotion or defence of their particular versions of Islam. Government denials of involvement tend to be disbelieved and many Kenyans in public life openly support extra-judicial killings as a 'desirable' element of the state policy to defeat terror (Botha 2014). On another key level, Kenyan government collaboration and cooperation with its regional state neighbours against al-Shabaab and other dangerous groups remains weak. As will be seen, this remains a fundamental weakness of the current African Union inter-governmental strategy to defeat radical terror in the effected countries and to contain and stop its spread.

By contrast, following the 1998 American Embassy bombing in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania seemed to experience only moderate or low security problems. This began to change as al-Shabaab established

itself after 2007, although its impact and influence has been slow to penetrate Tanzania when compared with Kenya. It might be considered surprising given that Tanzania has a larger Muslim population than its neighbour, with half of all Tanzanians being of the Muslim faith and constituting around 19 million people. Two-thirds of Muslims are Sunnis with Shias representing an important minority grouping. It could be expected that radical elements of Islam might emerge more quickly here, especially in the light of the independence movements on Zanzibar and Pemba islands which assert strong Islamic identifications (Lopez 2015). However, since 2010 a self-assured Muslim politics has emerged in the shape of the Civic United Front (CUF) which holds power in Zanzibar in collaboration with Julius Nyerere's old Party of the Revolution (CCM) which has ruled since independence (LeSage 2014). The CUF is a moderate reformist expression of a much broader assertion of Islamic and Islamist sentiment both within its stronghold in Zanzibar and in the rest of the country. Yet older more restrained party leaders have in recent years increasingly been replaced by radicals in line with the changing sentiment of the Muslim electorate (Mutch 2014).

Strong evidence has emerged of the links between Islamist leaders in Tanzania, al-Shabaab in Somalia and al-Hijra in Kenya as Tanzania's role in AMISOM in Somalia is extended (Lopez 2015; LeSage 2014). Islamists stoke up perceptions of oppression and alienation among Muslims, encouraging street protests which result in violent clashes against Christians and their symbols such as churches or religious centres. Attacks on Western foreigners including tourists have become more common. There has also been renewed determination to attack members of the security services. Al-Shabaab increasingly operates through local citizens and is developing more sophisticated and deadly means to engage in assaults on its perceived enemies. Al-Hijra is reported to have a base in Tanzania, extending its field of operations from Kenya, and in 2013 al-Shabaab military-style training and indoctrination camps were found in Mtwara and Tanga regions (BBC World News, 2015). This is making Tanzania a potential transit country and bridgehead of operations for both local and foreign jihadists (LeSage 2014; Lyman 2014).

According to Haynes (2006: 497), Wahhabism has been spreading among Tanzania's Muslims, directly under the influence of visiting Saudi clerics and Saudi Arabian government sponsorship, and the Saudis are the effective ideological source of more extreme elements of radical Islam growing in Tanzania. Saudi Arabia is thought to be investing in the building of new mosques, madrassas and Wahhabi Islamic education centres. The long-term implications of Islamization in the country are yet to be realised, and outcomes are not automatically ones of conflict. However, as LeSage (2014: 1) has stated "today's seemingly minor and manageable threats can evolve quickly into something far more lethal and intractable," as Westgate and Garissa in Kenya have shown. This particular scenario is more likely to emerge where intelligence services are under-resourced and weak, where borders are porous and poorly policed. Perhaps more importantly, a pressing problem may lie in the lack of effectiveness of intergovernmental cooperation. State and intelligence services fail to coordinate actions to cripple or limit the movement and activities of regional Islamist groups.

### **Nigeria: Boko Haram**

Nigeria is currently faced with a particularly extreme security problem. Boko Haram, or Sunnah for Preaching and Jihad which loosely means non-Islamic education is forbidden<sup>6</sup>, has proved to be the deadliest of Africa's terrorist groups, killing 20,000 Nigerian citizens between 2009 and 2015 and displacing 2.5 million people (Elu and Price 2015). As a deleterious side-effect, Nigeria experienced hundreds of retaliatory killings of Muslims by Christians, raising the constant possibility of widespread civil unrest and religious war on a considerable scale, an outcome regarded by Boko Haram as highly desirable for its implicit strategy of establishing an Islamic state carved from the north of the country, alongside the total imposition of *Sharia* on Nigeria. As a terrorist group it represents a

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<sup>6</sup> Translation into English is problematic. In the Hausa language *Boko* refers to a sham or fraud, *karatun boko* to sham Western education. *Haram* should be translated as 'forbidden' rather than sin, which is a Christian not a Muslim concept (Montclos 2014).

serious challenge both to government and mainstream Islam within Nigeria (De Montclos 2014).

Boko Haram first appeared in 2002 with the stated intention of toppling Nigeria's central government. It declared itself a jihadi organisation in July 2009 under its leader Mohammed Yusuf who had recently returned from self-imposed exile in Saudi Arabia (Mohammed 2014). What distinguishes it from other rebel movements within the country and beyond is its strict adherence to radical Islam along with its increasingly strong links with the international terrorist community, including direct collaboration with al-Qaeda. In 2015 it moved to declare affiliation with ISIS. Several of its leaders received Wahhabi Islamic education and military training within Somali. By 2002 Somalia had become the favoured base for international Islamists following the loss of centres in Afghanistan after the American invasion to oust the Taliban regime implicated in the 9/11 attacks of 2001. Boko Haram has parallels with al-Shabaab which also thrives logistically and financially through international networks of terror. However, al-Shabaab distinctively retains elements of Somalian nationalism which expresses itself in its struggle to wrest Somalia from other African (especially Kenyan or Ethiopian) and foreign Western domination, although it too wishes for an Islamic State in its country. Boko Haram neither reveals nor has any tangible allegiance to nationalism (Onuoha 2014). It is single-mindedly against secular authority in any national or civil form, and favours complete Islamisation of society on an international scale. Boko Haram regards Western education as one of its greatest enemies, and it regularly attacks universities and schools. In April 2014 its militants descended on a remote school in Chibok, abducting 276 young girls and killing their teachers. Few of the abductees ever returned to their families, most being forcibly converted to Islam and married off to fighters. This proved to be the group's most successful propaganda *coup* to date, given that news of the attack spread around the world through global media, resulting in an unsuccessful international campaign to 'bring back our girls' (The Guardian, 14 April 2015). The Nigerian government's failure to either locate or to free the schoolgirls considerably weakened the legitimacy of President Goodluck Jonathan leading to his ousting in the 2015



plebiscite that placed Muhamad Buhari as President of the Federal Government. De Montclos (2014: 135-6) argues that “depending on [various] positions, Boko Haram is thus considered a political uprising, a religious organisation, a social movement, or a purely criminal affair”.

Nigeria shares similar ethnic and religious divisions with its neighbours. However, the geographic divide between the north and the south of the country is more conflictual and starker than anywhere else. Islam is well-entrenched and rooted in the north where powerful Wahhabi radical currents have emerged in the last generation. In 1999 *Sharia* was declared by the strongly non-secular Zamfara regional government imposing prohibitions on women’s dress, closure of all businesses for Friday prayer, and restrictions on public music and celebration (The Independent, 28 October 1999). Christian and other non-Muslim groups were widely expected to comply. This led to rioting between Christians and Muslims that left over 100 dead and several thousand injured. The establishment of a regular army presence sent by central government to keep the peace was widely resented by Muslims and the Islamic authorities (De Montclos 2014). In November and December 2002 Muslims rioted in protest against Nigeria’s hosting of the Miss World contest, condemning the event as breaching *Sharia*, and 260 died with thousands of homes burned in Kaduna, Abuja and Lagos (BBC News, 16 December 2002). Violence was not always one-sided. In both 2004 and 2006 Christian militias attacked the homes of Muslims in Yelwa, again leading to intercommunal and inter-religious clashes with a repeat of former high death tolls (Paden 2015). Muslim clerics and regional political leaders were emboldened by subsequent central government military and political pressure placed on them, and they encouraged supporters to engage in further acts of violence in pursuit of their separatist independent state in north. Moderate Islamic clerics were forced to flee from north Nigeria, leaving hard-line radical Islamists to dominate (Paden 2015). It was within this climate that Boko Haram emerged.

The rising scale and intensity of Boko Haram attacks on the Nigerian society and beyond into Cameroon, Chad and Niger, had exposed their governments to charges of ineptitude, weakness and

even collaboration with terrorists (BBC News, 3 September 2013). Nigeria, as the primary base of the group and home of its founding leader Mohammed Yusuf, was regarded by its neighbours as bearing much of the responsibility for containing and eliminating them, and has been regularly blamed for the failure to achieve this (Mohammed 2014; Onuoha 2014). While Yusuf was caught and killed by security forces in 2009, he has since been replaced by Abubakar Shekau. The emergence of a new Islamic group, Ansaru<sup>7</sup> in 2012 pointed to a state in meltdown on security matters (BBC News, 12 August 2015).

It has been widely argued that Nigeria has pursued a one-track military policy to deal with its terrorism problem (Campbell and Weitz 2014; De Montcos 2014; Serrano and Pieri 2014). Periods of military neglect were suddenly followed by large-scale interventions into urban and rural areas, mainly in Borno, Kano and Kaduna. Serious rights abuses including looting, rape, extrajudicial killings and executions, sometimes of civilians by security forces, point to a heavy-handed and out-of-control military response (Mohammed 2014). As in Kenya, this has had the undesired effect of alienating civilian populations and making the security situation worse than previously. Serrano and Pieri (2014: 192-3) describe the Nigerian situation as follows:

The battle thus far from the side of Boko Haram has largely consisted of small-scale insurgent hit-and-run attacks on a range of government and civilian targets, followed by large-scale retaliatory military deployments from the state security forces, widespread urban lockdowns, door-to-door searches, and haphazard large-scale arrests. This dynamic has left much of the population of the north of Nigeria caught between Boko Haram brutality and JTF [state Joint Task Force] excesses of authority. [This] has created a situation where the constant ebb and flow of insurgent gains and systemic human rights abuses on the part of both insurgents and security forces make any substantial security improvements fleeting.

Generally, therefore, the state has tended to mismanage the response to terrorism and there have been cases where terrorism has

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<sup>7</sup> Translated as Vanguard for the Protection of Muslims in Black Africa, Ansaru condemns the indiscriminate killings by Boko Haram, especially the targeting of Muslims and innocents.

been used as a political tool by political leaders. In the run up to the March 2015 national elections, Goodluck Jonathan's spontaneous launching of military operations that recaptured key areas where Boko Haram militants were entrenched was regarded as a bid to reverse his poor record in dealing with the insurgency, rather than any genuine security measure, in an effort to gain re-election. He failed in this goal and lost power (The Guardian, 1 April 2015). The public perception of neglect in resolving the Chibok schoolgirl kidnappings proved to be a further factor that ruled against him.

Political leaders have similarly been remiss in addressing mass poverty and inequality in terms of income and resource distribution in what is now a relatively rich country<sup>8</sup>. Corruption on a huge scale is prevalent. Northern Nigeria has some of the poorest populations in the country, along with mass unemployment despite impressive annual national economic growth rates. Muslims are some of the most destitute and marginalised among the Nigerian people (Basedau, Vüllers and Körner 2013). Conditions of inequality and injustice are natural breeding grounds for militancy and radicalism. For Muslims, Islam as an egalitarian religion becomes attractive and offers hope to marginalised communities ignored by their state, and the most visible variant of Islam in Africa is radical Wahhabism. Addressing terrorism and its causes requires more than an ill-considered military response.

### **Engaging religious fundamentalism: The African Union and new policy approaches**

Modern African counter-terrorism policy emerged after the 1998 attacks in Kenya and Tanzania and the 9/11 2001 events in the United States. Since 1998 the African Union has launched at least eight conventions and declarations that address terrorism (Allison 2015; Cilliers 2015). The 2002 Algiers Plan of Action and the 2004 Addis Ababa Protocol sought concrete and practical means to implement their more general statements (African Union 2014). Plans included regular meetings between national security services

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<sup>8</sup> The World Bank now rates Nigeria as Africa's biggest economy. It overtook South Africa in 2015.

and the centralising and widespread sharing of computerised information and intelligence about terrorists and criminals. Evidence of imminent terrorist activities would be forwarded, Passport Stop Lists would be circulated to identify wanted terrorists, computerised immigration controls would be implemented, and advanced security technology would be incorporated into new passports.

Only 12 out of 40 states have so far signed up to the 2002 Algiers Plan (Lyman 2014). These are mainly nations directly experiencing terrorism with a powerful motivation to ameliorate the situation. Yet even signatories experiencing serious insurgencies have organisational and logistical difficulties in sharing key intelligence. This hesitancy arises from perceptions of secrecy related to 'national security'. Solutions to terror in the eyes of certain states become narrowly national rather than collaboratively regional as neighbouring governments might fall out or pursue economic or foreign policies that others perceive as unacceptable (Rosand, Millar and Ipe 2007). Some may become enemies. Certain states lack organisational capacity or expertise to implement basic practical counter-terrorism measures of African Union declarations. The above creates perfect conditions for terrorists to move freely and undetected across porous borders, their communication networks and operations functioning largely unhindered and unmonitored. This allows conditions for African-based terrorism to grow and thrive (Allison 2015).

A legislative blueprint, the African Model Anti-Terrorism law of 2011, was intended to shape and create a continent-wide set of statutes and principles which would establish legal coordination between states. However, disagreement on implementation on much of this delayed these measures from coming into force until 2014, and a majority of states continue to dispute or stall on them (Allison 2015). Only one in three States have adopted the African Union's counter-terrorism legal framework which not only makes arrest, extradition and prosecution difficult, but also renders actions uncoordinated and ineffective. There is heavy reliance on foreign aid to fund the fight against Islamic insurgency, with African state treasuries resistant to finance remedial solutions adequately. Allison

(2015: 6) states that “so far, the African Union has not convinced a majority of states that counter-terrorism is an urgent priority.”

Lyman (2014) has argued that Western nations and African governments failed to give the Islamist insurgency in Africa adequate attention immediately after the 1998 East African attacks. Furthermore, he argues that to a significant degree lessons are still to be learned. However, a large proportion of African states are now recognising the threat, but many have yet to match the sheer scale of the security challenge with the necessary capacity building and resource base. President Ali Bongo Ondimba of Gabon has warned of the poor response to the threat of terrorism in Africa, stating: “Most of us do not have the experience to fight terrorism. It’s new to us. We are not responding enough. It seems like the terrorists have the upper hand” (The Financial Times, 16 May 2016).

With the failure of states to coordinate and present an authentic united front against terror stands an over-reliance on a military solution. Military containment of Islamist terrorism and stabilisation of affected territories is an essential and inevitable policy measure (Lyman 2014; Onuoha 2014). Yet in its current form in Africa it can be said to have failed because it is generally not part of a broader strategy. For the most affected nations success in this area has been patchy. No African or indeed other nation has so far solved the problem of Islamist terror by military force. Campbell and Weitz (2014) promote alternative non-military policy interventions to curb and contain systemic religious violence across Africa and in the rest of the globe. They argue that there should be more emphasis on normal policing rather than resorting to soldiers as the first line of attack:

A particularly important function for civilian law enforcement bodies in counterterrorist operations is to disrupt terrorist financing and uncover links between terrorists and organized criminal groups. Many modern terrorist groups, like some insurgents, derive substantial funds from narcotics trafficking and other illicit activities. Good police forces contribute to criminal justice as well as public security (Campbell and Weitz 2014: 23).

Policing can be valuable in surveillance and deterrence activities to provide intelligence information and keep track of the main terror groups and their supporters. It represents an alternative to military operations, although it can operate in parallel. In the case of Tanzania where violent religious-linked incidents remain relatively low level compared to Kenya or Nigeria, militarisation of the situation would be unwise and likely to provoke a serious civil reaction. Policing options might be more effective using highly trained units adept at intelligence gathering, and dedicated to the fight against radical religious groups and organised crime (both of which are frequently linked). This would offer an acceptable civic alternative (Campbell and Weitz 2014). In African societies currently devastated by terrorism, both a shrewd military and well-funded and institutionalised policing option will be essential. However, military or police shows of force without a range of other measures will never succeed in the face of a powerful belief system, which Islam typifies.

However, Campbell and Weitz's (2014) reliance on non-military options may lack realism in the face of the sheer brutality of some terror groups. This also applies to positions which lobby for a negotiated settlement with such organisations. Use of military force is likely to be a permanent policy measure to contain Islamic insurgency, but it cannot be the only one. Where military force is used, it must be measured, disciplined and reasonable, and within legal bounds of just-war theory. Somalia, Kenya and Nigeria have seen military might deployed disproportionately against civilian populations, often missing the intended terrorist groups themselves and creating deep hostility toward official government and political authority (Serrano and Pieri 2014).

The growth of violent Islamic fundamentalism in sub-Saharan Africa has arisen due to a combination of policy failure and policy non-adherence. While individual elements of African Union declarations and counter-terrorism frameworks are in principle sensible, overall general policy lacks a long-term goal of eradication that addresses root causes. Terrorism is reactively 'policed' and applied policy over-militarised rather than proactively and judiciously engaged. Policing actions and military campaigns tend to be ill-conceived, disorganised and directed indiscriminately at civilians

when the main actors in terror are underground and nowhere to be found. Muslim communities are subsequently forced further into the societal margins and become receptive to radicalisation and the support of violence. Kisiangani (2011: 12) states that:

The key to successful counter-insurgency is winning over the local population. This calls for an integrated socio-economic and political approach designed to address the local population's needs and make them feel secure. And the local community needs to accept there may be occasions when the reasonable use of force is required against those disturbing their harmony. A victory, therefore, is not about the destruction of the insurgent fighters, but winning the hearts and minds of the local population.

A more general problem has historical roots, and is a matter of terminology. African states have long been averse to use the term 'terrorism' as in the past anti-colonial movements had frequently been labelled 'terrorists'. It is seen as pejorative and current usage is still dichotomous and problematic (Davis 2010). The fact that western countries, some of whom were the former colonisers, also widely use the term makes some political leaders nervous and suspicious that certain Islamic social movements might not be terrorists in any real sense. Only nations such as Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania and their conflict-affected neighbours tend to see matters differently. African countries with no experience or history of global radical Islamism have difficulties grasping the scale and danger inherent in contemporary terrorist movements, and have at times unwittingly cast themselves in the role of apologists (Lyman 2014). Waking up to the reality and threat to Africa from Islamists is a key requirement, and the African Union could do more to alert African leaders to this.

African Union counterterrorism policy and law must be fully instituted, respected, and incorporated by African governments into national polity. States must work together whether or not they are directly affected by terrorism to overcome narrow national interests and thinking. Intelligence on security issues involving terrorism and

terror groups must be shared. African Union policy and law would be subject to the usual monitoring and assessment to determine progress, and new policies may be needed as events and circumstance evolve. The African Union must uphold, promote and defend its own established collective counter-measures against terror. It has been singularly lax in this thus far (Allison 2016). What further approaches can be deployed to block or contain terrorism and curtail its spread into currently unaffected states?

Education can be utilised as a key policy tool against extremist ideology and dogma (Hill 2010). Many African citizens converted or recruited to Islamist groups have low levels of education, and lack social and economic capital. Universal and well-funded state education might consolidate knowledge and critical thinking to counter radical ideologies. Islamic schools that promote moderate and peaceful traditions of Islam such as Sufist and Ahmadi are to be preferred over those that teach conflictual or divisive variants (Masud 2011). Wahhabism, heavily sponsored in Nigeria and Tanzania, can be challenged by less authoritarian Islamic alternatives. This is not to seek to deter or sanction conservative Muslims who wish to pursue Wahhabism peaceably without imposing strict beliefs on others. But violent Wahhabism that preaches compulsion and intolerance must be prudently challenged. Islamic religious leaders in African societies can play a key civic role here (Paden 2015; Hill 2010). Both lower and middle-class Muslims attracted to radical Islam might be better guided by moderate and knowledgeable clerics conversant in the complexities of religious tradition and reform, while leaders who promote Islamist radicalism and violence should be subject to normal criminal laws of incitement.

Reinforcement of a moderate Islam can also incorporate the issue of women's rights, a controversial and contentious issue in Islam as well as between Islam and Western liberalism. Olarinmoye (2013), writing for the Nigerian context, has argued that reformist versions of Islam open up possibilities for a discourse within Islam and society where women are given more space and inclusion. She admits that this faces opposition from conservatives. To date, the empowerment of women in Africa has had a short history, and the continent has tended to have its own patriarchal restrictions on women, shaped by



its tradition and culture. Yet in recent years women's empowerment has led to an expansion of gender rights through public campaigns and changes in law. The continued active promotion of such rights, along with greater self-determination of women in African society, would serve to firmly establish an African feminist counter-ideology that reaches into Islam itself (Mernissi 2011).

State and society can merge development strategies into the fight against terrorism, and the two need not be regarded as incompatible. The removal or erosion of the socio-economic bases of inequality and poverty which feed radicalism is needed through continued development and economic growth (Rosand, Millar and Ipe 2007). Development growth must be inclusive, not exclusive. Marginalised groups, of which Muslims form a significant part in some African societies, should be participants and beneficiaries of wealth generation and distribution. Public perceptions of state corruption and the loss of state and national wealth to dishonest private individuals should be addressed. Erosion of stability of state and public institutions due to fraud and cronyism is a chief reason citizens turn toward radical Islam which promises improvement and purification of the institutions of society (De Waal 2015). It preaches equality and fairness in ways similar to Marxism and socialism. Sharing of economic resources and duty to the poor are characteristics common to both ideologies. Where they part is on matters of secularism and religious commitment (Schwartz 2009). This equity ideal, particularly in an age where socialism is currently discredited following the decline of communist regimes across the globe, is immensely attractive to poor or socially demoralised people with Islamic traditions. Corrupt African states risk a complete loss of political legitimacy in the face of neo-patrimonialism and the cynical existence of the political marketplace (De Waal 2015). Citizens will always look to alternatives, including to those that are radical or destructive, in the face of such harsh realities. It has also been argued that an unchecked growth of terrorism will seriously undermine efforts toward social and economic development, another reason for its urgent eradication (Brück and Wickström 2004).

Somalia cannot be ignored in the search for long-term solutions. Its civil and governmental instability remains a key policy challenge

for an African counter-terrorism strategy. While Somalia was not the sole cause of the rise of Islamic Wahhabi extremism in the region, it remains a driver. Radical Islamist and organised criminal groups are entrenched and operating in relative safety, forming core networks that destabilise, damage and disrupt other societies in addition to their own. Much of the country is beyond effective national governance and the rule of law and this and external forces, including Somalia's neighbours and the West, are hindering a final resolution of the problem. Ethiopia and Kenya have undue influence over Somalia's future, and they tend to follow their own national interests rather than contribute to sovereignty and stable statehood. Meanwhile, a strong regional militaristic Western presence further serves to destabilise Somalia (Healy 2015).

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has offered a background discussion of the emergence of jihadi terrorism in the Horn of Africa, and East and West Africa. It focused on those countries that have directly experienced the rapid rise of radical Islamism, and attempted to clarify the ideological, sociological and political processes that were identified as contributing to the seeding and growth of Islamic insurgencies. It was argued that the entrenchment in Africa of radical Wahhabi Islam (which crucially informs the thinking of many radical Islamist movements and organisations), and the formation of its most violent radical armed groups, must be seen as a product of broader global processes and events. The Islamic Resurgence after the Iranian Revolution, referred to as of crucial relevance to the formation of the present world order by Huntington (1997), has been entrenched in Africa and is now present in key sections of Muslim populations across many nations. African leaders have neglected this development. Some Muslims peacefully and privately seek a satisfactory ontological security in their religion, where Islam informs every aspect of their existence, while other Muslims do not and pursue violence and compulsion. African security policies and actions to address radical Islamism have fallen short and been found seriously wanting.

A committed and inspired interest in anti-terrorist security policy implementation and adherence to the important tenets of that policy are key challenges for African states. African governments frequently fail in the all-important task of security cooperation to eradicate the safe havens for Islamist and other violent groups.<sup>9</sup> They could work together to close the bank accounts and sources of wealth that fund bomb and gun attacks, and restrict the movement of terror suspects. Rising above national interests, both financial and political, and a concerted effort to solve regional issues that cause violence and underdevelopment are required: African states need to evolve a less narrow national cognition.

Finally, the persistent challenge of Somalian state fragility which has been prevalent for over a quarter of a century should be a priority for the African Union beyond its current AMISOM mission. Somalia was where much of the African Islamic insurgency was nurtured, even though its inception is to be found more readily within global conditions. Neither Africa nor the West has done anything notable to stabilise Somalia and establish a peaceful functioning state. National interest and cynical manoeuvring of neighbouring governments took priority over the welfare of the country. Western counterinsurgency policy and funding propped up this arrangement, and cannot be regarded in any better light (De Waal 2015). A permanent solution in Somalia would deprive Islamists and other terror groups of a valuable centre of operation. Attention to a similar emerging deterioration in Mali should accompany resolution of the Somalia question. Policy action should be motivated, well-coordinated and effective. African Union states must collectively solve this growing security issue themselves rather than rely on international agencies, and vigorously engage in the containment and eradication of the burgeoning terror networks springing up among Muslim populations in Africa. Development, inclusion of the dispossessed in the economic, social and political life of their

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<sup>9</sup> Islamist groups are not the only African problem. The fact that the millenarian Lord's Resistance Army, nominally a 'Christian' movement that has killed many thousands of innocent people, has continued to operate in north Uganda and across the borders to other nations for over twenty years is inconceivable. This represents another failure of African inter-governmental cooperation to deal with terrorism.

countries, a sharing of African wealth as the continent rises economically, and careful management and taming of the more radical ideological currents of resurgent Islam (problematic though this may sound) are fundamental to progress.

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### **Violence, Identity and Politics of Belonging: The April 2015 Afrophobic Attacks in South Africa and the Emergence of Some Discourses**

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#### **Introduction**

*“If a man from another country is living in your land with you, do not make life hard for him; Let him be to you as one of your countrymen and have love for him as for yourself; for you were living in a strange land, in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God” (Leviticus 19: 33-34).*

The month of April in 2015 witnessed some ruthless attacks on indigenous Africans of foreign origins<sup>10</sup> living in South Africa especially in Durban and Johannesburg. There were also some small echoes of attacks, which however remained isolated in other places such as Cape Town. These attacks came within seven years of the widely condemned 2008 country-wide xenophobic attacks across South Africa. The attacks also followed in the growing pattern from 2000 that targeted indigenous Africans (heretofore referred to as Africans) of other nations living in South Africa (Aids Foundation of South Africa, 2015). Among these, were the 2005 and 2007 sprouts of xenophobic attacks against Africans in Olievenhoutbosch in Gauteng Province, with the latter attack resulting in the deaths of about 100 Somali traders and shop attendants (Tevera, 2013: 14). Although the month of April 2015 [re]focused the world attention to the xenophobic violence, the events from January 2015 had been

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<sup>10</sup> Throughout the text we use the terms indigenous Africans from other countries and foreigners interchangeably to denote those people who, though of the African descent, were not South Africans and were targeted for attack in various ways. We are, however, cognisant of the negative connotations implied in the term foreigners, including alien-ness, strangeness, unwanted-ness and un-belongingness. As such, we do not deploy it uncritically.

conspiring to culminate in these barbaric attacks. To this extent, from January 2015 there had been recorded xenophobic attacks including the looting of foreign shops (Karimi, 2015) and violent confrontations between some South Africans and foreigners from other African states. These interfaces had led to the increase in the increases in the number of cases of murdered African foreigners who were living or working in the townships. Such incidences, however, were recorded as criminal activities rather than xenophobic attacks. While the 2015 attacks resulted in limited deaths of up to seven compared to more than sixty deaths in 2008 (Karimi, 2015) and a few thousands who were injured, they profoundly affected the socio-economic conditions of South Africa, including large-scale lynching and displacements of up to 5 000 individuals in the affected areas (Aids Foundation of South Africa, 2015). There were also reports indicating some foreigners in government employment hastily abandoning their posts (*News dzeZimbabwe*, 2015) and some foreigners who began to trek back to their home countries out of fear (Ibid). Alongside these incidences, there was also widespread looting and burning down of shops, other businesses and homes owned by foreigners in the Durban and Johannesburg areas.

Among the commonly cited reasons for the attacks were that the foreigners took away jobs from the South Africans, sold fake goods as in the case of the brutally murdered cigarette vendor Emmanuel Sithole of Mozambique, committed crimes in their areas, took beautiful South African women, and, generally added to the pressures on South African infrastructure. Some interesting features of these attacks, other than having ideologues including the Zulu King, Goodwill Zwelithini, and other senior government officials who blamed the foreigners for causing some of the ills in South Africa (*Mail and Guardian*, 15/4/2015), was that they, unlike the 2008 attacks, were more localised to the Durban and to greater Johannesburg environs. There were also some rumours of “trains full of Zulus” invading cities and harassing foreigners (*AlJazeera*, 18 April 2015). For us, the latter rumours inscribe colonial notions of Zulus as warriors and belonging to a “superior” ethnic group, rendering them a masculine people in whose existence the protection of the South African nation was to be guaranteed. Such stories can also be

said to rest on colonially invented myths that have identified the Zulus as a violent warrior people.

While interest for some researches may be on the causes of these 2015 attacks and or how they differed from the 2008 attacks, the focus of this chapter is to explore the emergence of some discourses from these 2015 attacks on Africans from beyond South Africa's borders. To this extent, the chapter troubles the appellations of the discursive narratives including afrophobia, necklacing, the deployment of hate language like lice and ants, a subversion of *Ubuntu*, and a third force in the participation and commission to the xenophobic violence of 2015. The chapter further deploys the definition of xenophobia that incorporates the "attitude[s]" of "a dislike, a fear, or hatred" of foreigners as well as the practice and effects including "intense tension and violence ... towards immigrants" (Harris, 2002: 170). This elevates the chapter to connect the attitudes to the violence that is associated with xenophobia and the appellations of the discursive narratives that have become associated with the xenophobic violence. As Harris posits: xenophobia "is not just an attitude; it is an activity. It is not just a dislike or fear of foreigners; it is a violent practice that results in bodily *and psychological* harm and damage" (2002:170, emphasis original). Basing on this critical unpacking and understanding, we consider xenophobia as both constitutive of "negative representations and practices that discriminate against immigrants, refugees and migrants" (Tevera, 2013:10). In the ensuing paragraphs, we articulate some of the nuanced discursive narratives that pervaded the discussions of the xenophobic attacks of 2015. Reference to the 2008 and to other xenophobic episodes since post-Apartheid governance in South Africa is made with a view to buttress different theories of xenophobia and to illuminate the genealogical trajectory of the emergence of the particular discourses under discussion.

## From xenophobia to afrophobia: On the dimensions of afrophobia

A distinguishing narrative of the 2015 xenophobic violence in South Africa was that the attacks were largely perceived as constitutive of afrophobia (a form of xenophobia) and not xenophobia in the strictest and broadest sense. The notion of afrophobia found large-scale circulation at the start of April 2015 starting when South Africa's Minister of Home Affairs Malusi Gigaba used it to describe the xenophobic attacks directed against African immigrants in South Africa. It is imperative, however, to mention that this notion, together with its equivalent, negrophobia, gained traction from the 2008 attacks on foreigners in South Africa (see Gqola 2008; Mngxitama 2008). One of the major reasons for this appellation was that most of the attacks were directed against foreigners of indigenous African descent. Thus, afrophobia may be defined as the hatred, dislike and fear of foreigners of African descent by indigenous Africans of the hosting country, and in this case of South Africa. The trend of attacking foreigners of African descent, as already alluded to, was also witnessed in the 2008 attacks where only business operations run by Africans were targeted while those run by Indians and Chinese were seemingly spared (Nkealah 2008:9). As well, foreign whites from Europe and America who were largely and favourably considered as "tourists" and "expats" by the indigenous South Africans (Quartz 2015) even they were living and working permanently in South Africa were spared. In the end, as Nkealah (2008:9) suggests, "this scenario points to a subtle suggestion that only African immigrants constitute 'surplus bodies' or 'excess baggage' that should be disposed of, while the rest of the foreign nationals are given passports of *belonging*" (emphasis in the original). While this might be the case, it may also mean that the "unbelonging-ness" of foreigners from Asia and the Global North are visible and therefore not a problem to South African indigeneity, unlike that of African migrants who, if allowed to stay would "invade" and "takeover" South Africa. Among others, the comments made by President Zuma's son apparently in support of King Zwelithini's call for foreigners to "pack their bags and go home"

(*Mail and Guardian*, 29/4/15), insinuated that some of the African foreigners, because of their numbers and because some “had guns” which they could use to foment a *coup de tat* in South Africa, were literally “taking over” the country such that they needed to be checked (*Mail and Guardian* 15/4/2015; see also Jinga 2012: 68). Among some of the contributory factors to the attacks on Africans was that Africans by far dominated the international immigration charts of South Africa. To this end, while indigenous Africans constituted about seventy-nine per cent of the total immigrants into South Africa, Europeans constituted about seventeen per cent, and Asians comprised only three per cent (MiWORC, 2015 cited in *Daily Mavericks*, 20 April 2015). Another factor was that the majority of the African immigrants stayed in the townships where some, especially the Somalis and the Congolese, ran small businesses. As such, foreign Africans were not only visible but presented themselves as readymade ‘punching bags’ of South African frustrations and disillusionments and easy targets for xenophobic attacks. Following in this biocultural hypothesis one also sees that these foreigners in the townships were easily picked on because they exhibited distinguishable biological and cultural differences. These include physical makeup, dress styles, inability to speak local South African languages, distinctive accents, vaccination marks (Harris 2002) and were darker than South Africans (Mbembe 2015). These “indexical markers or signifiers” easily separated these foreigners from the locals, which therefore made them easy targets for attacks (Harris 2002:174) where the politics of foreignness reigned.

An interesting dimension of these afrophobic sentiments and attacks, proffered by Gathogo and Phiri (2009: 4-5) is that they could be reduced to the level of *tribal* antagonism, hatred, and attacks. To Gathogo and Phiri (2009: 4-5), afrophobia carried with it undertones of negative ethnicity or tribalism in which one person from another ethnic group persistently negatively views the other, especially when the targeted one is perceived as ‘inferior’ or ‘uncivilised’. To them, unlike ethnicity which “is understood as the awareness of the existence of real socio-cultural differences among the several groups of people with different territorial and ancestral origins” *tribalism* “bears some negative or discriminative tendencies.” And, “as a

concept, tribalism implies that there are *tribes*, and that they differentiate and discriminate among themselves on account of the distinct identities of the various peoples, which can be experienced in terms of cultural traditions and values.” This is unlike “positive ethnicity” in which “ethnic groups co-exist harmoniously, irrespective of their socio-cultural diversities” (Ibid: 5). In the end, one finds that *tribe* (hence tribalism) carries many negative connotations like:

misleading historical and cultural assumptions. It blocks accurate views of African realities. At best, any interpretation of African events that relies on the idea of *tribe* contributes no understanding of specific issues around cultural discourses and politics of mobility in specific countries. At worst, it perpetuates the idea that African identities and conflicts are in some way more ‘primitive’ than those in other parts of the world (Ibid).

In this regard, the “othering” that emerges speaks to the others as less equal, inferior and as sources of the trouble for the other *tribe*. In the South African context, the other Africans from “north of the Limpopo” emanating from the economically poor and politically troubled countries were the source of troubles for the South Africans by, *inter alia*, taking jobs, causing crime, having little respect for South Africans, being easily exploited by whites and taking South African women (Mbembe 2015). As “uncivilised” and backward beings, these foreigners were perceived as hustlers who did not bring any dividends with them but instead, came to compete with locals for the limited resources and opportunities in South Africa. The “othering” even took an interesting turn when some South Africans from minority ethnicities, especially those in the north and north-west, were also attacked as foreigners. This more or less then reduced the “black” on “black” violence to ethnic confrontations in the absence of attacks on other foreigners other than “blacks”.

More than representing ethnicity, the attacks on foreigners have been constructed as illustrative of “new racism” that pits *blacks* attacking other *blacks* that are considered as inferior (Tafira, 2011:114). For Tafira (Ibid), the new racism is more cultural than the

biological differences in skin colour as “culture takes precedence over anything else” based on differences in “culture, nationality, language, dress, habits and ethnicity”. This articulation resonates with the Foucauldian formulation of race that was more social than biological. In the Foucauldian (1997: 254) formulation, social race is more dangerous than the biological distinction because it is used to separate those people who have to live from those who have to die. Picking it from the Foucauldian formulation of race, we theorise that afrophobia was social racism that was more excluding and discriminatory than biological racism because if taken far it ends up infiltrating the most important constituent of human society, namely the family. It has, in fact, the potential to tear apart families and other societal groupings – levels that physical racism in its all discriminatory forms is yet to achieve.

In addition to the above, the racialisation of the xenophobic attacks in South Africa emerges where only African immigrants were targeted, ‘while Europeans and Americans [were] practically welcomed with open arms’ (Solomon and Kosaka, n.d: 8). Furthermore, “this racially selective xenophobia – *afrophobia* – is exemplified by the fact that many of those in [organisational] leadership positions in South Africa are of ‘foreign’ origin, suggesting that exclusion is not simply directed against ‘foreigners’ but against those who seem to correspond to stereotypes of the stranger, especially those from Africa” (Solomon and Kosaka, n.d: 8). The possible explanation for the apparent welcoming of the *white* foreigners is that they may be placed in the category of “foreigners whose impact is demonstrably positive” (Solomon and Kosaka, n.d: 11). They are not tainted in the image of “African primitiveness,” disease and poverty – labelling that perpetrators of afrophobia are refusing to deny and relegate to the dungeons of peripheries. It should be noted that generally, South Africans pointed to other African countries as “Africa” in its derogatory and primitive sense. The name “Africa” was popularized, among others, in the preeminent South African *soap opera* titled: “Generations: The Legacy” that was aired from 2015. In the *opera*, Lucy Diale, a ruthless shebeen queen, constantly denigrates her runner named Adze as Africa to specifically denote that he was from beyond the border [and

the exceptional civilisation] of South Africa. In the plural, Africa becomes *maAfrica*, that is those from [the rest of] Africa (Quartz, 2015) as distinguished from those from within South Africa. Implied insidiously is that South Africa is not a part of the referred greater Africa. In addition to the above, Zimbabweans were also referred to as Mugabe, after their long reigning President (Jinga, 2012:78). One is also reminded of President Jacob Zuma's connotative sentiments made when defending the imposition of urban toll fees on South African roads. Emphasising the difference between South Africa and the rest of Africa, Zuma allegedly remarked: "We can't think like Africans in Africa generally. We are in Johannesburg. This is Johannesburg. It is not some national road in Malawi. No!" (*Africacheck*, 2013).

Another interesting dimension to the afrophobia discourse is that it is steeped in the justificatory discourse or the scapegoat narrative that is rooted for some South Africans in the stereotypes of foreigners causing economic damage to South Africa. Broadly speaking, and as has already been outlined, the indigenous South Africans opined that the other Africans took their jobs, did not respect them, externalised currency, took South African women and congested South Africa's social services. The above was wrongly coupled by sentiments that South Africa did not owe any moral debt to Africa for the support granted during South Africa's fight against Apartheid (Mbembe 2015).

When all this is considered together with the apparent marginalisation of blacks in South Africa (Marongwe and Mawere 2015), in which by the year 2015, 21.7 percent of all South Africans live in extreme poverty and up to 53.8 percent survive on less than \$75 a month (Statistics South Africa, 2015 cited in Patel and Essa, 2015), it is easy to recognise how it was easy to use Africans as a scapegoat for the black South Africans' misfortune. To this end, the indigenous South Africans attacked indigenous Africans from other countries because of their continued economic exclusion which generated frustration and aggression which they then vented on the easy targets, the other indigenous Africans from the rest of Africa who lived within their midst in the townships. The above is encapsulated in the words of Solomon and Kosaka (n.d: 10-11) that:



“the South African ‘economic miracle’ ... has catered to the needs of the affluent few, whilst ordinary South Africans are still trapped in shacks, shanty towns, poverty and uncertainty, struggling with *black* African immigrants for survival.” And, this then compounded the “hatred and bitterness directed towards *black* Africans, whose marginal and vulnerable status [made] them easy targets” which allowed South African *blacks* to vent out the feeling that their long struggle for democracy had not fulfilled expectations and it allowed them to differentiate themselves from the backward others (Ibid: 11). Thus, as Harris (2001, cited in Solomon and Kosaka, n.d: 11), in such “contexts of compounding frustrations and disappointments, it [was] easy to turn migrants and foreigners into scapegoats.”

## Necklacing

Necklacing is one dimension that afrophobia assumed. The 2015 attacks witnessed the widespread adoption of necklacing. In the 2008 nation-wide attacks on foreigners, the killing of Mozambican national, Ernesto Alfabeto Nhamuave by a burning tyre doused in petrol dangled around his neck with a gathered crowd of afrophobic perpetrators in admiration and joyous approval expressed through clapping and laughing (Makatile, 2008) epitomised the acceptance of this brutal strategy of killing foreigners in South African townships. In this modality, necklacing involved the placement of flaming tyres around the necks of the victims of the attacks often resulting in their painful deaths. In the 2015 round of xenophobic attacks, *The Herald* (15/04/15) led with the picture of a suspected foreigner being necklaced by a mob. Graphically, the case for necklacing for the 2015 attacks was represented in the widely circulated video on the social media in which five youths, including three minors, allegedly from Zimbabwe were tied together and had flaming tyres dangled around their necks (*News24*, 11/04/15). It was claimed that three died immediately from the attack, while the fourth victim was critically injured and the fifth one who had suffered minor burns was arrested by the South African (Ibid). While the debate on whether or not these youths were necklaced for a criminal case or due to the desire to rid South Africa of foreigners, what remains is that they were foreign

victims in the video and that the attack happened around the period of the eruption of anti-foreign violence in 2015 in South Africa. Thus, the significance of the video was in refocusing the world's attention on how barbaric the xenophobic attacks in South Africa could be. The use of this method evoked a throwback to the golden era for necklacing between the mid-1980s and mid-1990s (Ball, 1994) when it was used as part of an anti-Apartheid tactics that *black* South African nationalist supporters used against suspected *black impimpi* or sell outs (Moosage, 2010). During that struggle against Apartheid necklacing was popularised by Winnie Mandela who in 1986 rousingly vouched that “together hand-in-hand, with our boxes of matches and our necklaces, we shall liberate this country” (South Africa History online). Not surprisingly, because it was targeted at *impimpi*, necklacing was as such largely used on *blacks* (Ball, 1994). Thus, one finds that violence, especially necklacing, has a long and sanctified role in the politics of treating the other in the *black* townships going back to the period of the struggle against Apartheid. The spectacle of necklacing was consequently highly performative of what indigenous South Africans ought to do with undesirable subjects. The public demonstration of the ‘act,’ the different roles played by different actors and audiences to necklacing dramatised a normalisation of crude violence against those perceived as threats to South African nationhood. Its performance in the presence of a crowd was unfortunately demonstrative of ‘shared’ views and ‘acceptable’ afrophobia in the false name of communal justice.

At another level, the act of necklacing should be considered in terms of its symbolic meaning to the other foreigners of African descent. Basically, it sent the message to these foreigners to move out of the townships of South Africa simultaneously as it killed the victims. This is in the mould of the public pre-modern punishment that Foucault (1998) discusses, including the murders of criminals such as Damians who had attempted to assassinate a French King. To Foucault, besides creating a spectacle of the theatrical representation, a large crowd was needed because: “an execution that was known to be taking place, but which did so in secret, would scarcely have any meaning. The aim was to make an example, not only by making people aware that the slightest offence was likely to

be punished, but by arousing feelings of terror by the spectacle of power letting its anger fall upon the guilty person”(Foucault, 1998: 58-59). This also resonates with some expressed aims of necklacing in the 1980s that were expressed to the newspaper, *The City Press* that necklacing was meant “for everyone to see how comrades dealt with criminals” (City Press, 4 July 1993).

### **Third Force or institutionalised hatred of foreigners?**

The other dimension that afrophobia in South Africa assumed during the 2015 attacks was institutionalised hatred of foreigners. An interesting and related discourse to emerge, though with less purchase, is that of a third force or sinister force behind the attacks. As Landau (n.d:1) posits, the idea of a Third Force first emerged in the 2008 attacks. The reference to a third force served to denote that the source of the attacks lay outside of the oft thought spontaneity of the township communities. In this way the agency was taken to lie beyond the township communities to some centre that was responsible for the centralised planning. Various, and inconclusively, the third force was thought amorphously to be “criminals, and even foreigners” (Landau, nd: 1). This brings into the picture the Mamdani lens on the Rwandan genocide in which there were distinct planning and commissioning centres of the genocide. Regarding the South African case, the then (2008) Minister of the Department of Home Affairs, Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, alleged that there was a “catalyst behind the violence” and “there could be people who are stoking the fires because these are people who have been living side by side for a very long time” (Tshisela, 2008). As well, it was reported that: the police “had identified the people behind the mayhem and murder and promised they would soon be arrested” (Unknown, 21/05/2008).

One source that was cited as an institutional centre for the 2015 attacks was King Goodwill Zwelithini. The accusation made against him came in the wake of the statement he made while addressing a crowd at Pongola. He allegedly stated that:

most government leaders do not want to speak out on this matter because they are scared of losing votes. As the king of the Zulu nation, I cannot tolerate a situation where we are being led by leaders with no views whatsoever. We are requesting those who come from outside to please go back to your countries. The fact that there were countries that played a role in the country's [South Africa] struggle for liberation should not be used as an excuse to create a situation where foreigners are allowed to inconvenience locals. I know you were in their countries during the struggle for liberation. But the fact of the matter is you did not set-up businesses in their countries ..." (Ndou, 2015).

These sentiments were taken to be xenophobic and inciting of attacks of foreigners in many quarters of South Africa. The same utterances could also be considered to have given some kind of ideological moralisation and justification for the attacks as the first attacks happened in Durban within a week of Zwelithini's address. The dominant indigenous language around Durban is isiZulu, spoken by the Zulus who fell under the traditional leadership of King Zwelithini. As such, one can reasonably assume some kind of connection between the King's speech and the attacks on foreigners that occurred within one week of each other.

The above views attributed to King Zwelithini seemed also to find support, institutionally, from the law enforcement agencies of South Africa. Various studies, including the one by the Centre for the Study of Violence and reconciliation (CSVr) (cited by Solomon and Kosaka, n.d: 7) as far back as 2004 and another one by Solomon and Kosaka (n.d: 7) revealed shocking findings that incriminated the South African police officers and other law enforcement agents in exhibiting xenophobic attitudes towards foreigners. Among others, it was argued that these state agents systematically refused to offer foreigners protection because they were alien, had illegal statuses and/or because "foreigners lied all the time" (Solomon and Kosaka, n.d: 7). In addition to the above and in other situations, the police, army and Department of Home Affairs officials abused migrants on the pretext that they caused a rise in crime in South Africa (Human Rights Watch, 1998:4). It has also been confirmed that at the

deportation centres like Lindela, the officers routinely sexually abused inmates, demanded bribes, physically beat inmates, denied them legal representation, and/ or kept them for too long in order to extract more money from the state as they were paid per the stay of each inmate (Landau, n.d: 9). Elsewhere, immigration, police and military personnel “assault[ed] and extort[ed] money from foreign migrants,” carried out night raids in residential areas, did not give foreigners enough time to gather belongings and/ or detained undocumented foreigners for more than 30 days without pursuing proper procedures often in deplorable detention conditions (Human rights Watch, 2006:n.p). Furthermore, Jinga (2012:81-87) describes in painstaking detail incidents that he witnessed at the Crown Mines Home Affairs Department in Johannesburg of some officials whipping foreigners to maintain queues and how some received bribes to serve those who were not at the front ends of queues.

The situation was made worse by the other issues that strengthened the institutionalisation of xenophobic tendencies. Among others, it is not easy for foreigners to open bank accounts (in fact only those with permits could) and had limited access to state protection (Human Rights Watch, 2006). Those without permits also received relatively lower wages in the construction businesses and on farms, the two major employers for African immigrants (Human Rights Watch, 2006). What made the situation worse for those who could not open bank accounts was that they would be forced to keep all their savings on their persons, which further attracted thieves and other criminal gangs to target them under various pretexts. To further buttress the notion of a certain kind of institutionalisation of xenophobic tendencies, there seems to be a long genealogy of the use of xenophobic semantics by South African politicians. The sentiments that called on all foreigners to leave South Africa that have been attributed to King Zwelithini, for instance, resonates with similar ones expressed in 2003 by Mongosuthu Buthelezi. Whilst he was then Home Affairs Minister, he alleged that his “biggest headache” pertained to the aliens who were “pouring into South Africa” (cited in Solomon and Kosaka, n.d: 14).

Besides the senior state and government officials, some of the media houses were at the forefront of propagating hate messages

against foreigners. Broadly, the reportage of some media houses fed into the stereotypes of foreigners as criminals. In other ways, also, the media justified the xenophobic sentiments and attacks. As illustrations, various newspapers at different moments had story liners like: “Zimbabweans pour into South Africa” (Mangezvo, 2015: 62). Some news items like in the *Daily Sun* (cited in Harber, 2008:163 quoted in Mangezvo, 2015:63), quoted some indigenous South Africans who alleged that: “many of us live in fear of foreign gangsters and conmen. Much terror has been caused by gangs of armed Zimbabweans, Mozambicans and others [...]. Not every foreigner is a gangster, of course- but too many are ...” Elsewhere, Culbertson (2009: 22-23) gives a succinct summation of some of the news articles that intimated at “floods” of immigrants into South Africa including the *Pretoria News* (July 2007) that headlined: “Zimbabwe’s human tsunami floods into South Africa”. The imagery of a tsunami, for example, visualises a nation whose destruction was imminent if correct measures were not taken urgently to avert the disaster. One is made to imagine how ordinary South Africans would feel and react when they came face to face with this human tsunami. With the above sentiments from high offices and powerful perception shaping institutions, such as the media, it is therefore very simplistic to narrow afrophobia and xenophobia in general to a township culture of violence.

Going forward, it has also been established that the mainstream media in South Africa added to the anti-African feelings among South Africans. To this degree, the media was found to be uncritical in its use of terms that are xenophobic, including “alien” and “illegal” as well as some phrases that speak to foreigners *flooding* South Africa (Solomon and Kosaka, n.d: 12). Furthermore, the media was perceived to be at the forefront of linking crime to specific foreign African nationalities. For example, as Nyamnjoh (2006) observes that a part of the South African common sense fuelled in part by the media associated Nigerians with drugs trade, the Congolese with diamond smuggling and passport racketeering and Zimbabwean women with prostitution (cited in Solomon and Kosaka, n.d: 12).

## The *kwerekwere* are stealing our jobs

This section deals with the troubling and teasing of the widely articulated narrative that foreigners (*kwerekwere/ amakwerekwere*) stole South African opportunities. This discourse, although perennial, had a lot of purchase in the 2015 afrophobic violence. According to this narrative the foreigners, particularly indigenous foreigners of African descent represented demons that were taking up employment and other business opportunities that could have been utilised by the indigenous South Africans (Landau, nd:10-11). Illustrative of this line of thought are views of two senior government officials. It must be pointed out that their expressed views also reinforce on the preceding section's articulation of the institutionalisation of the dislike of foreigners. Among others, in February of 2015, Nomvula Mokonyane, the Minister of Water and Sanitation, on her Facebook page commented for Kagiso area in Gauteng Province, that: "almost every second outlet (spaza) or even former general dealer shops are run by people of Somali or Pakistan origin ... I am not xenophobic fellow comrades and friends but this is a recipe for disaster" (*The Guardian*, 20 April 2015). Similar views were expressed by the Small Business Development Minister, Lindiwe Zulu, who posited that "[f]oreigners need to understand that they are here as a courtesy and our priority is to the people of this country first and foremost... They cannot barricade themselves in and not share their practices with local business owners" (*The Guardian*, 20 April 2015). These senior government officials' views built on and fed into the general afrophobic views expressed in the South African media and by lay people that foreigners caused socio-economic harm for the South Africans.

The starting point for the accusation that foreigners took opportunities from South Africans is the truism that foreigners from African countries came from countries with "weak national economies" and from those countries that were also characterised by political instability (Tevera, 2013:12). As such, the primary goal of the immigrants besides escaping to safety is to look for jobs to further their livelihoods sustenance. Worse still, the foreigners were accused

of accepting low wages for their services (Tevera, 2013:14) and were generally tolerant of employers' abuse.

That foreigners were stealing locals' jobs was however proved wrong by the Migrating for Work Research Consortium (MiWORC), which established in 2014 that only four per cent of the workers in South Africa, that is 1,2 million out of 33 017 579 workers were of foreign origins. Out of this 1, 2 million, that is, some 79 per cent were of African origin (*The Guardian*, 20 April 2015). The above revelations affirms a study by Crush and Pendleton (2004: 2), which established that it is more of a perception than reality as up to 90 per cent of respondents had no personal experience of failing to access employment after it went to a foreigner and where over 60 per cent had never heard of locals who were denied jobs after it was taken up by a foreigner.

However, what the MiWORC did establish was that the rate of unemployment for the foreign immigrants was much lower at 14, 68 per cent compared to the 26, 16 per cent for the locals (*The Guardian*, 20 April 2015). This was attributable to the fact that foreign workers tended also to be absorbed in those jobs that were shunned by the local South Africans, including the informal sector (Ibid). This affirms a study by Nkealah (2008:3) which established that indeed many foreigners took away the usually unskilled job opportunities from the South Africans. To her, "it is common knowledge that immigrants from neighbouring Southern African countries quickly get employed in jobs that require manual skills, either because they present themselves as cheap labour or because they tend to be extremely hard working in order to please their bosses and thus keep their jobs." As such, the foreigners were despised especially by the unemployed South Africans. The value of this argument can be found from the fact that it was from the townships of South Africa that the 2008 and 2015 xenophobic attacks happened where the majority of the unemployed indigenous South Africans lived (Mangezvo, 2015:48-50). The significance of the high unemployment levels as a cause of xenophobic attacks also comes from the Ivory Coast and Kenya where the unemployed male youths were at the forefront of attacking foreign migrants in their respective countries (Mangezvo, Ibid).



The sentiments above resonate with the fact that most African immigrants in South Africa, particularly from Zimbabwe who form the largest contingent of foreigners in South Africa (Human Rights Watch, 2006), Malawi and Mozambique, who also constitute a significant quota of foreigners in South Africa (Crush and Pendleton, 2004: 4), end up in the townships. Their choosing of the townships is based on their relative familiarity with the indigenous Nguni languages spoken in the townships of South Africa (Nkealah, 2008). To this, one could say that for some Zimbabweans, the ability to speak Ndebele puts them in good stead to speak isiZulu and Xhosa, two of the dominant languages of the South African townships. More so, many other Zimbabweans together with some Mozambicans are able to speak either or both Venda and Tsonga or Shangani, languages that are also spoken in many townships of South Africa. To add more, the people from Lesotho converse well in Sotho while those from Swaziland are able to easily speak isiZulu and Xhosa.

What made the South African situation worse also was the fact that the immigrants target towns, which further worsened the service delivery situation in the urban areas, particularly townships. This was especially in the provision of adequate housing, clean water and refuse services (Solomon and Osaka, n.d: 8). The reality of the South African townships was that they were already structurally disadvantaged from the era of South African colonialism and from coloniality (Morreira 2010; Marongwe and Mawere, 2015). Due to the effects of the structural violence the townships were “situated in the geographic periphery of the city [where] poverty [was] a reality for most inhabitants” with the Cape Town African Urban Poor (CTAUP) study of 2004 revealing that up to 70 per cent of township dwellers lived under inadequate food situations (Morreira, 2010: 6). An anthropological study of xenophobic tendencies in parts of Cape Town and Stellenbosch by Mangizvo (2015: 209-210) also revealed that townships were challenged in terms of the provision of accommodation and were dominated by the unemployed. As a result, the continued influx of foreigners and rural black South Africans into the townships worsened the already precarious poverty situation which in the process helped to generate conditions of violence and xenophobia (Morreira, 2010: 6).

This line of thought is well presented by Tevera (2013:16) who posits that the prevailing socio-economic conditions of hardships in the townships undergirded by structural violence of joblessness, poor service delivery, marginalisation and inadequate amenities were the key drivers of xenophobic sentiments and attacks against foreigners in Alexandra Township of greater Johannesburg. This resonates with the findings of Crush and Pendleton (2004:39) who posited that the worsening conditions in the townships were key to the use of foreigners as scapegoats for the predicament of the locals who experience deteriorating economic opportunities. The deterioration in living standards of the local South Africans also prompted the government, local authorities as well as politicians, as recorded in the views of the two ministers' views, to factor in the foreigner plague as responsible for challenges faced by locals and the absence of meaningful development. As Landau (nd: 12) asserts, what made the township situation worse was that the geographic areas drawn from the Apartheid days became places where "the ... relatively and absolutely poor groups of 'blacks' [were] concentrated" and these townships lay "on the physical margins of more prosperous and lighter skinned communities". Such locations constantly reminded the blacks therein of the strict demarcation of space (Landau, *ibid*), and possibly the need to jealously safeguard their areas from other invasive 'races'. In a way therefore, the accusations also spoke to the township residents' frustrations at the inadequate rate of socio-economic transfiguration in South Africa (Landau, nd: 12).

The accusations that foreigners were taking up South African jobs should also be analysed together with other accusations including claims that foreigners were bringing disease to South Africa, were stretching the country's social services, were sending money out of South Africa (Crush and Pendleton 2004:23; Solomon and Kosaka, n.d: 8), were taking beautiful South African women, were behind the growing crime rates related to house breakings and drug trafficking, and were taking away from the South Africans small business opportunities in the townships (Nkealah 2008:1-5; Culbertson 2009: 9-11). On the latter aspect, it is largely the Somalis, Nigerians and Congolese (together with Chinese, Indian and Pakistani migrants) who were accused of running spaza shops, bars,

fast food outlets and other small businesses in the townships, which could be run by the locals (Tevera 2013:12-13). Added to this category of entrepreneurship is street vending, both side street vendors and hawkers who operate from buses and trains, which is also dominated by foreign nationals in South Africa (Tevera 2013:12-13). As a result of these complaints the foreigners had to “leave or die” (Nkealah 2008:1). An interesting intersection that Nkealah raises, besides speaking to “patriarchal and heteronormative masculinities” (Pumla Gqoli cited in Nkealah 2008:9) linking South African jobs and women to South African men, is that the alleged taking up of South African women and business opportunities by the foreigners also raised some stereotypes that because of the businesses they ran the foreign men were better able to take care of the women than the locals. Added to this was that the foreign African men were better endowed with bigger sexual organs than the South African men, which meant that they were also in a better position to satisfy the women (Nkealah, 2008). Such perceptions wounded the masculinity of the South African men who then sought to expunge the foreign and invasive masculinity of the other African men (Nkealah 2008). On the part of the South African males, this generated threatened masculinities (Mangezvo 2015). In the end what emerges is that the competition for “space and for the same clientele” (Tevera 2013:13) and for the same women transforms into a violent business-cum-social turf war. In the 2008 xenophobic attacks, this resulted in the vandalism and/or burning of up to 500 shops belonging to foreigners (Tevera 2013:14). Be that as it may, it also stands to reason that the targeting of foreign traders or businesses should not be surprising as an earlier survey indicated that more than fifty per cent South Africans opposed the setting up of [especially small] businesses by foreigners, including hawking and buying and selling, and even called for the government to invoke tough legislations to curb the practice (see Crush and Pendleton, 2004: 38).

The indictments could also be considered in terms of the “scapegoating hypothesis” (Harris, 2002:171). In this regard, as the South Africans failed to access socio-economic amenities they began to fabricate “frustration scapegoats” to “blame for ongoing deprivation and poverty. Foreigners ... often become such

scapegoats. This is because they [were] interpreted as a threat to jobs, housing, education and health care” (Harris, 2002:171). As Tshitereke, cited in Harris (2002: 171) the frustration for the South Africans comes from the fact that the dawn of independence raised high hopes for the locals but failed to meet these expectations for *black* South Africans for improved conditions and opportunities, and more importantly, it raised people’s consciousness about the unequal distribution of “resources and wealth in the country.” In the end, the scapegoating creates “a causal link between relative deprivation, xenophobia and collective violence” (Tshitereke cited in Harris, 2002: 172).

### **I am [South] African and you are ants and lice: A subversion of *Ubuntu* ethos**

This section builds from the injudicious, provocative and potentially inciting utterances that King Zwelithini allegedly made in Pongola District in March of 2015 which disparaged foreigners as ants and lice. Broadly, these sentiments were taken as the harbinger to the April Xenophobic attacks on foreigners. To the King: “I won’t keep quiet when people who have no say are playing with this country. It is now time for us to have a say ... We must deal with our own lice. In our heads let’s take out the ants and leave them in the sun” (du Preez, 2015). King Zwelithini further claimed that foreigners were all over South Africa and were making the streets dirty (Ibid). The essence of this section is to demonstrate that as foreigners of African origins began to be considered as less- humans (or sub-humans) and more as parasitic animals, they were to be eliminated. And, as less-humans, the ethos of *Ubuntu* could not be extended to them. The gist of this is well-encapsulated in the words of Tromp, Olifant and Savides (2015) who wrote of the episode of the gruesome attack on Mozambican Emmanuel Sithole during the April 2015 attacks that: “In those moments, Emmanuel Sithole was no longer a man, a neighbour, a human being. The intensity on his attackers’ faces showed that he had become a thing to kill - each thrust aimed with ferocity.”

The recurrence of the xenophobic attacks also speaks to the subversion of the *Ubuntu* ethos. This was particularly deplorable for a country that had Desmond Tutu, a key architect of *Ubuntu* lived philosophy. According to Tutu, cited in Gathogo and Phiri (2009: 9):

Africans believe in something that is difficult to render in English. We call it *Ubuntu*, *botho*. It means the essence of being human. You know when it is there and when it is absent. It speaks about humaneness, gentleness, and hospitality, putting yourself on behalf of others, being vulnerable. It embraces compassion and toughness. It recognizes that my humanity is bound up in yours, for we can only be human together.

South Africa was succinctly reminded of the need for *Ubuntu* by Phumzile van Damme, the Spokesperson of the South African official opposition party, the Democratic Alliance, who, following the gruesome murder of Emmanuel Sithole decried that “the life of Emmanuel Sithole must not be lost in vain. His death must remind us that our neighbours, our brothers and our sisters are part of us, as we are part of them. We must not forget our common humanity” (*Newswire*, 2015). In the end, and following from above, at the political level, the xenophobic attacks also troubled the oft recited African National Congress (ANC) founding charter’s claim that was also inserted in the country’s progressive constitution, on inclusivity, that South Africa belonged to all who lived in it.

It should also be realised that when the African foreigners trek to South Africa for both economic and political reasons, they do so expecting *Ubuntu* based acceptance and a return favour for the role the continent played in fighting Apartheid. As Morreira (2010: 2) argues, when African immigrants come to South Africa they do so with a false belief that South Africans will sympathise with them on the basis of “struggle brothers” as many African countries helped the South Africans dismantle and overthrow apartheid and on the basis of *Ubuntu* hospitality. However, these “notions of regionalism and commonality are disregarded in favour of notions of sovereignty and difference” by the South Africans (Morreira, 2010: 2). As Mbembe (2015) posits, the South Africans feel that “South Africa does not owe any moral debt to Africa [because] there were less than 30,000 South Africans in exile and they were all scattered throughout the

world — 4 in Ghana, 3 in Ethiopia, a few in Zambia, and many more in Russia and Eastern Europe! So we will not accept to be morally blackmailed by “those foreigners.” Similar views were also expressed by King Zwelithini (*Mail and Guardian*, 29/4/2015). The desire for the protection of South African sovereignty stems in part from the perception that South Africa and South Africans were better than the rest of Africa/ns, which overly speaks to the Mamdani’s South African exceptionalism (see, Marongwe and Mawere, 2015).

The above desires also stem from the effects of Apartheid on the South Africa blacks. Broadly, apartheid conflated belonging to South Africa with strict and specific geographic boundaries, which meant that the development of citizenship was also limited to nativity in certain regions of the country. Beyond the regions, the blacks were considered as foreigners. It also limited contact between South Africans and the rest of the world, including fellow Africans. As such, there emerged a “brutal culture of hostility towards strangers” (Solomon and Kosaka, n.d: 9). Added to this, because there is “no history of incorporating them [foreigners] meant that South Africans were and still are, unable to tolerate difference” Solomon and Kosaka, n.d: 9).

The inversion of the Ubuntu ethos was also supported by acts of criminality in some of the attacks. The basic point is that of exploring the potential relationship between crime and the xenophobic attacks. The starting point here is that crime in South Africa was rooted in “poverty, unemployment and a generally high *drug rate use*” (Solomon and Kosaka, n.d: 21). As such, it was in this milieu that the attacks on foreigners took place. As a result, criminal activities such as arson to scare away foreign entrepreneurs, corruption and payment for protection allegations where foreign shopkeepers were asked for example to pay R50-00 per two weeks for protection (Solomon and Kosaka, nd: 21) were made concurrently to benefit the locals as to scare away the foreigners. In some instances the violence of the attacks on foreign business owners was meant to scare them away which provided room for the locals to loot goods from such vacated businesses. The above is graphically depicted by Oatway (2015) who wrote in a newspaper piece during the April 2015 afrophobic attacks regarding a foreign owned shop that had been looted that: “th[e]

shop's roof had been peeled back ... Most of the goods had been taken. The floor was a mess with spilt soft drinks and other detritus.”

## Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to interrogate the appellations of some discourses sprouting from forms of xenophobic violence such as afrophobia that gained currency in the 2015 xenophobic attacks in South Africa. Broadly, the chapter sought to explore with deep nuances some insights and connections linked to the emergent narratives pertaining to afrophobia, necklacing, subversion of *Ubuntu*, scapegoating and a third force in the participation and commission to the xenophobic violence of 2015. A closer consideration of these narratives has also invited for a relooking of the scourge of xenophobia from the simplistic cause-effect mode to one that is deeper and more complex. Broadly, we also argue that studies and researches on xenophobia and violence at large need to be complicated much more, especially with regard to xenophobia's salient features.

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# Violence, Power, Politics and (Anti-)development in Africa

*Nkwaazi Nkuzi Mhango*

## Introduction

Since the inception of Western administrative systems, Africa has evidenced many violent conflicts resulting from power struggles across the continent. Soon after acquiring independence, many African countries found themselves facing *coup d'états* and many other types of squabbling among elites that were largely aimed at controlling the reins of power as the automatic means of controlling resources that Africa is richly endowed with. Arguably, African politics in the post-colonial era evidenced many underdevelopments resulting from the anti-developmental nature of power struggles in many countries, especially countries that were under military juntas or corrupt dictators who divided their people along ethnic and ideological lines in order to exploit and rule them easily. In tackling the important issues regarding violence, power, politics and anti-development that have pervaded post-colonial Africa, this chapter explores, *inter alia*, divide-and-rule strategy that colonial masters employed viciously and perpetually to arrest African development; and the that post-colonial African leaders have adopted to heinously entrench and sustain themselves in power. Added to this, as has been observed by Rodney (1972), the crafting of colonial African politics and governing powers based on violence was one of the major causes of Africa's underdevelopment by Europe. The same Euro-serving colonial interests have been continued through neocolonialism after the colonial masters exited Africa temporarily under the ploy of independence. Since African countries got independence and thereafter, African politics have been dominated by European way of doing things thanks to aping almost everything from Europe. Our governments, parliaments and other national institutions are but

Europe's typical replicas. We currently have almost all political and institutional settings mainly based on European models as opposed to the ones African had for many centuries before the coming of European colonisers in the late eighteenth century when they "officially" put their stamp on African politics. To underscore how Africa fared before the introduction of colonialism emanating from the 1884 Berlin Conference, one needs to ask a question: Were there any political and institutional systems in Africa before? The answer is obvious and simple. There were a lot of them on the African soil, some of which were arguably even at par or above European ones. Dahomey provides an ideal example to show and prove how some African societies were ahead of European ones as Claessen and Henri (1987: 210) note that, "The Dahomean governmental system, that was used in the ancient Kingdom of Dahomey in modern West Africa was large and complex. Several categories of officials and functionaries can be distinguished." Essentially, the art of administration is nothing new to Africa just like any society given that even some animals and insects run their groups through certain types and settings of administration. What makes the current administrative system new is the fact that Africa adopted European systems of administration as its colonial relics and carryovers if not hangovers. Dahomey's example provides a window into how African societies ran their affairs and organised themselves before the coming of colonialists from Europe. As such, the question would be: what, more evidence do we need to prove such a claim? There is much evidence subscribing to the fact that Africa was not as redundant and underdeveloped as many European bigots alleged and others still maintain. Many Victorian thinkers viewed Africa as an uncivilised continent; and therefore colonising it was not immoral or illegal. It defies logic for a person or people who portray themselves as civilised to openly argue that Africa was redundant and primitive as far as governing systems are concerned. What does "complex and distinguishable categories mean if we face it? When it comes to how advanced and developed Africa was, this chapter does not want to touch on Egypt, one of the giants of civilizations of the world. I, therefore, address myself to what brought Africa to a desperate situation that it is in today. I use only one facet of colonial lies and

plots namely divide-and-rule, as a strategy colonial masters used to explore the four concepts this chapter tackles. I will try as much as I can not to venture outside due to the fact that there are many ploys that European colonial monsters employed to deceive themselves and the world that Africa was devoid of anything to do with civilisation. However, for matters of clarity I may venture out a little bit, however, my focal point will be divide-and-rule as the harbinger of violence, power struggles, divisive politics and anti-development practices as evidence in Africa from the colonial era. I must state from the outset that violence, power, politics, and anti-development are the sour fruits of malicious colonialism and its machinations that have perpetually been maintained by those with colonial mentality and malice against Africa as means of subduing and exploiting Africa perpetually. I will base, as argued prior on divide-and-rule strategy based on ethnopolitical dimensions of African societies, countries, and the continent at large.

Although most of ethnic and ethnopolitical conflicts that Africa is currently suffering from may be blamed on parties to conflict, they have all hallmarks of colonial strategy famously known as divide and rule. European colonial monsters I like to use instead of masters given that they were nobody's masters except monsters who devoured our continent (Mhango 2015, introduced, and used this strategy aimed at easily weakening, sabotaging and exploiting their former colonies which indirectly went on becoming *neo-colonies*. However, in many cases, the divide-and-rule strategy which colonizers used to create and fuel negative ethnicity and ethnopolitical conflicts in many places they colonized went unnoticed. In this chapter, I seek to show, and thereby explore, how the divide-and-rule strategy created many ethnic and ethnoconflicts that Africa is witnessing today. For example, through segregating, pitting Africans against others, and favouring ethnic group against another, European colonial monsters created identity conflicts in Africa which have haunted the victims even after colonizers physically left the continent. Mawere (2014) makes the same claim *vis-à-vis* how the victims of colonialism suffer identity crisis. Carter *et al* (2009) identify two major causes of ethnopolitical conflicts; *inter alia*, namely 1) identity and 2) politics. Carter *et al* argue that “neither

identity nor values are negotiable,” (p.302) especially when they have the baggage resulting from artificiality and negativity attached to them. Undeniably, under divide and rule, colonial monsters [re]invented their victims. They based their rationale on, *inter alia*, pseudo physiological and historical features of the groups so as to create new and artificial as well as antagonistic entities that ended up turning each against each another as it was envisioned by their inventors and the perpetrators of this heinous systemic crime against humanity. This crime has hanged on up till now. Burundi’s and Rwanda’s ethnic conflicts that have been going on intermittently since the introduction of colonialism provide an ideal example whereby German, Belgian and French colonial monsters used physiological features such as the height and the nose of Tutsis to indicate that Tutsis were superior to Hutus which they did maliciously knowing how it was a sheer lie that went on up till 1994 culminating in the genocide that shocked the world. Even when the international community was warned that genocide would take place in Rwanda. Again, the then regime in Rwanda and the international community did not put any measures in place to avoid it. This proves how divide and rule has always been maintained by those who enacted it. Essentially, after divide and rule was introduced in these two countries in which the two communities used to live harmoniously and cooperatively before, the natural identities of the two communities were completely altered so as to give rise to artificial and fake ones the victims used to disparage, discriminate against, and exterminate each other wantonly. Unfortunately, given that the victims blindly and gullibly accepted their artificial new identities, they did not venture outside the box by trying to assuage or terminate such artificiality of their identities. For, even when German and Belgian colonial monsters lost these two colonies after losing in their wars in Europe, French colonial monsters who took over expanded on this poisonous system thereafter. As if it was not enough, post-colonial governments in these two countries—that took over after French colonial monsters handed over the two colonies—reinforced this identity artificiality and toxicity that, as argued above, culminated to genocide in Rwanda. French colonial monsters used the same elements of hatred and deception to fuel divisions among



Hutus and Tutsis in two countries even after acquiring independence. However, this does not mean that the two communities did not have conflict between themselves. The thing is that their then conflict did not amount to what happened after the colonial masters maliciously divided them. McNulty (2000) maintains that:

France, uniquely in Europe, prides itself on having a global humanitarian mission, and evidence that this “homeland of human rights” was implicated in genocide through its military support until 1994 for the extremist regime in Rwanda shocked many who had applauded the declared pro-democracy, pro-humanitarian stance of President Mitterrand since 1981 (p.105).

The West once did the same in the DRC after some neighbouring countries invaded and plundered it. Instead of forcing the invaders to get out of the DRC and face international laws, the West became the destination for many resources that were plundered from the DRC, including coltan especially after the fall of Mobutu, former DRC’s dictator who ruined the country for over thirty years. Coltan has always featured high as one of the resources that rich countries get from the DRC. According to the CBC (10 December, 2010), coltan—a heat-resistant material that can hold a strong electrical charge—is used to make capacitors used in a wide variety of electronic devices, from cell phones, avionics to nuclear reactors. Coltan is also used in high-heat-resistant steel alloys for applications such as aircraft engines. Due to the role coltan plays in the economies of rich countries and its high demand, many beneficiaries turn a blind eye to the conflict or just offer lip services to it as it has been since the conflict started in the DRC. Nathan and Sarkar (2011) refer to cell phones as “bloody mobile phones”; and they want the international community to declare mobile phones illegal just like it did with the blood diamond which used to fuel wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Once, the diamond was illegalized and declared blood diamond, the conflicts in the two countries were resolved and thereby, the suffering these countries faced subsided or came to an end. Due to the international divide and rule, the West has failed to illegalize coltan as means of putting a stop on the conflict in the DRC. The

failure to declare coltan illegal and bloody and cell phones bloody cell phones shows how the whole world can be blamed for fuelling, and benefiting from the conflict in the DRC. I, therefore, advance that in a sense or by implication whoever uses cell phones, he or she voluntarily or otherwise fuels and funds the war in the DRC.

### **Recolonization by proxy and homemade black colonialists as the extension of divide and rule**

Due to the fact that colonial monsters changed the shape and manners of colonizing their former colonies by re-colonising through homemade-black colonialists or call them stooges who stodgily perfected the art of division, even after theatrically relinquished their colonies, they kept on interfering in the business of these countries. They did so by taking sides or reinforcing and perpetrating divisive politics based on power struggles among various artificial communities they created in many countries facing ethnic conflicts. Under such politics, there evolved divisions along *hoi polloi* and *hoity toity* not to mention the East and West divide. Despite this being contrary to the law and the meaning of independence, these colonial monsters were not reprimanded or made to redress their victims under the international law that seems to favour them as opposed to their victims. Again, due to the anarchical and unfair nature of the international system, for example Belgium, German and France have never been sued for the genocide they authored and fuelled in Rwanda. Such international political racism brings us to the fact that all types of powers be they political, social or economical in Africa, are still artificial and much more are still controlled by the West which authored colonialism based on divide and rule as we will see later. Arguably, before this *knife* that—to borrow from Chinua Achebe, slit their cord of harmonious coexistence and interdependence so as to fall apart, two societies in two countries used to live peacefully cooperating in happiness and grief before the introduction of colonialism that left them perpetually divided and antagonised wantonly. When it comes to ethnopolitical conflicts as fostered by colonial creation, current elites in many African countries egoistically and blindly use and fuel them in order to easily and heinously reach

their artificial and short-time goals under what Wimmer *et al* (2009: 317) call the pretext of protecting or advocating the rights and the wellbeing of “their peoples,” which provides incentives to align political loyalties along ethnic divides,” as opposed to their natural harmonious and coexistent relationship based on interdependence and cooperation. Such toxic politics of “our people” versus “their peoples” does not dwell on issues as far as seeking and using socio-political and economic power are concerned. Worse enough, most of, if not all political parties in countries facing toxic and negative ethnicity or ethnoconflicts are formed along ethnic lines which many scholars such as Marx and Durkheim among others thought would disappear as societies modernised. Newman (1991) argues that, “The early 1970s scholars argued that ethnic conflict would subside with the emergence of ‘modern’ societies (p. 451). Again, they got it wrong given that most of such scholars were Europeans who wrongly thought that Africa would follow the same trend Europe went through to reach at what they wrongly refer as modernity. Due to such biased and misguided assumptions propounded by pro-Western thinkers, there arises the need for African thinkers to revisit the root causes of ethnic conflicts and trouble their links with colonialism instead of wasting time erroneously thinking that ‘modernity’ would solve the problem. As has been established above in Newman (Ibid), the so-called modernity has exacerbated the conflicts by allowing exploitative laws and systems to become what is referred to as international institutions. As long as colonial systems that regulate African economic, political and social power remain the same, the problem that ethnicity and conflict pose will grow even bigger. For, if we examine the politics and policies under which our elections are convened and governments formed, we find that they largely revolve along ethnicity almost in all countries facing antagonistic ethnicity, such as Burundi, Rwanda, Nigeria, Kenya and the Central Africa Republic (CAR), among other provide an ideal example. When it comes to deliberating upon how to form political parties that are used as representative vehicles in forming governments, instead of dwelling on human needs based on justice, equality and parity, groups dwell on personalities especially “who is ours” and “who is not ours” all based on their fake and superimposed ethnicity and loyalty to the

group as it was the case in Rwanda during the genocide of 1994. In so doing, those who subscribe to such machinations, create artificial enemies due to their artificiality in seeing things during the conflict or stalemate. Given that the protagonists were maliciously and artificially invented and created, they, too, fall to and follow the same diabolic and misleading pattern by creating obnoxious and artificial enemies among those naturally and practically deemed to be their brothers and sisters as it is in the case of the two Hutus and Tutsis communities in Rwanda above among others in Africa. Instead of looking at their tool box as far as their future is concerned, the protagonists found themselves entrapped in the impasse so as to fail to underscore the fact that “the future lies in mustering all our energy to design imaginative but viable alternatives” (Max-Neef *et al* 1992,p.197). Instead of creatively and cooperatively looking for strategies to overcome the impasse, the groups ferociously and blindly find themselves in, the parties to the conflict reinforce and internalise everything for their self-destruction based on their acceptance of artificial animosity and negativity based on artificial reasons. The politics of “our-turn-to-eat” (Burgess *et al* 2010) in Kenya provides an ideal example of how ethnicity can blind and hijack people even if such people are viewed as educated. Instead of doing justice, such politics revolves around ethnical favouritism, vote rigging, and sometimes, results into persecution and violence. Merits become nothing. And, arguably, co-ethnicity becomes merits. The situation becomes worse given that most of those running the show are the ones we presume to be elites or enlightened ones. Once such allegiance—based on tunnel and destructive view is maliciously, blindly and artificially created based on bastardized and misrepresented ethnicity—causes fear and stonewalling which complicates and exacerbates the conflict even more so that all parties to the conflict become completely blindly unaware of the human rights and needs of others. Olick and Robbins (1998:106 cited in Armstrong and Crag 2006: 725) argue that, “collective memories are “images of the past” that social groups select, reproduce, and commemorate through “particular sets of practices” that are obviously destructive to the protagonists and productive to their inventors. While toxic ethnicity resulted to genocide in Rwanda, in

Kenya, it resulted to what came to famously be known as the 2007 Post-Election Violence (PEV), (Roberts 2009). Under such ethnical rationale based on the allegiance and alliance to ethnic groups, it becomes difficult to avoid the politics that author anti-development for the society. When such politics of fear and hatred kick in, we experience what happened during the elections in Kenya in 2007-08 whereby over a thousand innocent people were killed simply because they were not the members of the community that killed them. Instead of thinking and behaving like Kenyans, people altered and chose the identities they thought would protect them and their *interests* however wrong and deceptive this was. Such colonial carryovers have affected even our much touted Western democracy which totally failed to address this problem as we have seen in Kenya among others. For, when it comes to the needs of the societies and people, the electorate or the constituency—in such ethnopolitics—does not address issues; but, instead, it revolves around what Byrne (2001) calls “us” versus “them” binary, which elites use to strengthen the in-group solidarity and in-fighting as well; all aimed at getting away, literally with the murder by taking the members for a ride. Under such ethnopolitics, elites preach fear and hatred in order to make those they deem to be “their people” to conceive and see the danger their farfetched ‘enemies’ pose. What happened in Rwanda before the 1994 genocide when media was used to preach hatred speaks volumes. Essentially, when it comes to toxic and negative ethnicity, politics always produces the “politics of fear.” In such pointlessly antagonistic politics, it is easy to see how divide and rule plays its role of reinventing and [re]creating ideologies that churn out the propaganda of the hate of the ethnic other. For, the victims of divide and rule do not see things the way they actually are; but, instead, they look at them based the lenses of fear and suspicion resulting from hatred caused by divisions ensued after the malicious creation of such artificial entities entangled in an artificial conflict whose effects may lead to endemic and permanent negative effects to the protagonists. For them treating others unfair is a fair thing to do. You can see how blind such ethnopolitics cause in Rwanda where the minority Twas, a minority society made of pigmies were not considered in the preparations of genocide. For Hutu extremists, Twas did not exist

and if they did they did not matter. When the killings between Hutus and Tutsis started, Twas, just like anybody else, had to flee their country simply because two powerful communities were at each other's neck. Swahili sage has it that wars are always blind.

### **The role of parties to conflicts in resolving the conflict**

Principally, we need to carefully, rigorously, open-mindedly examine and explore divide and rule and the way various colonial monsters maliciously created and employed it in various countries as a vehicle of reaching their heinous goals of colonising, exploiting and running colonies easily and cheaply. Arguably, in doing so we seek to adduce some examples from Africa, and if need be, Asia and Europe, to support the arguments made and solutions prescribed. Therefore, this chapter carefully and honestly explores the strategy of divide and rule from when it was invented—at colonial time—to the aftermath of colonialism in various places in Africa. By so doing, the chapter seeks to substantiate and show the legacy and the consequences of the strategy even at the modern times when Africa is pointlessly accused of not doing its *homework* timely and rightly to get rid itself of the consequences of such chicanery as it was maliciously enacted by colonial monsters whom we tend to invite and trust with the hopes that they can solve our problems and resolve the conflicts we face while they want to reinforce and advance them to their advantage which is our peril

It makes more sense to survey, explore, criticise and, in the end, offer some recommendations of whatever nature and undertakings to be taken as means of addressing the conflicts all aimed at transforming or resolving them if not positively managing them. This chapter offers its recommendations based on the deconstruction and unveiling all flaws and malice behind whatever strategies the colonial monsters enacted and reinforced in the minds and psyches of their victims. Such *recipes* are offered as the means of avoiding or dealing with ethnic and ethno-political conflicts in constructive and innovative ways all aimed at helping those entrapped in them out of them productively. The deconstruction of the strategy of divide and rule is a good measure aimed at stopping the repetition of the

mistakes and flaws by maintaining superimposed divisions, fake identities and difference among victims among other things. So, too, we strongly propose reparations of the victims by their oppressors aimed at helping the former to deal with the effects of imperialism that followed after colonial masters left their former colonies. Importantly, we strongly urge parties to the conflict to seek what may unite them; instead of clinging to what divide them. Here history provides a good prospect of resolving the conflict productively based on the opportunities the conflict offers. I argue that members of such artificially created ethnicities must revisit their past, for example, for Burundi and Rwanda, they must cautiously and judiciously explore how they lived and fared before the introduction of colonialism. Mhango (2016) proposes the deconstruction of the strategy of divide and rule by urging its victims to turn it upside down to mean to unite and rule themselves where they were divided and ruled. This discourse, as critical as is, calls such attempts to resolve such ethnic conflicts the *reversed nature* of the problem whereby the solution is obtained by reversing everything. Instead of looking forward to getting the solution, the victims must look backward in order to move to the forward. This is logical; given that what transpired amidst them in the past is easy to trace compared to predicting the future that ignores the past of the victims. As argued above, in so doing, the parties to the conflict must seek all nuggets that used to unite them as they put aside anything and everything that fosters or fuels divisions and animosity among them although this is not a cookie-cutter methods. So, too, it is important for the victims to seek their own ways of justices be they restorative, distributive even collective ones. Despite their shortfalls, Gacaca Courts in Rwanda provide an ideal example of how victims can deal with their own conflict conditionally that they do it in a transparent, constructive and goodwill all aimed at getting out of the impasse and move forward. It is unfortunate that many ethnic conflicts in Africa are left to the same people who created and fuelled them to resolve them based on their own type of justice which does not fit and help the victims. The current ethnoconflict in the CAR provides an ideal example. France that ridiculously created the division in the CAR is now messing even more by investing and banking on militaristic means instead of

rebuilding relationship among the protagonists. In many cases, foreign intervention in conflicts in Africa seeks to synchronously help the victims while at the same time protecting the interests of those interfering as opposed to the interests of the victims. Others interfere in the conflict so as to seek leverage or *show off* internationally as any hegemonic state would like to do. For example, Clark (1998: 5) notes that, “France has managed to preserve its rank as first regional security provider, although by default, mainly in crisis situations (including in the Ivory Coast, Mali, and the CAR).” Ironically, despite this obtaining reality to be all over the place as far as foreign interventions are concerned, many African countries (Rwanda excluded) still pin their hopes on them while they actually know that their intervention is geared by self-serving and self-promoting goals at the expenses of those of the victims. On their part, African thinkers and politicians need to underscore this anomaly; and thereby make sure that they empower their own people instead of depending on foreigners to maintain their power. Such foreign interventions, given that involve foreigners who do not know the history of the victims or those who misrepresented and alter the true history of the victims, do not help anything except reinforcing divide and rule strategy based on conditionality such interveners set for the victims to be helped. The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) provides another ideal example. When Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda supported Laurent Kabila to topple DRC’s long-time dictator, Joseph Desire Mobutu, later Mobutu Seseseko, the Congolese thought that the trio was helping them to rid them of the parasite while they actually wanted to plunder their resources which attracted opportunists from within and without the society or country facing the conflict. All this was done to take advantage of shaky government after Mobutu fell. As argued above, Burundi, Rwanda, and Uganda helped Kabila and later invaded the DRC in order to plunder the resources. Griggs (1996) argues that “The geostrategic interests of Zairean Tutsis Rwanda Burundi and Uganda were laid bare in October 1996 with the creation of pro-Tutsi controlled 300km strip of eastern Zaire from Uvira to south Goma in North,” (p.70). At this juncture, local Congolese Tutsis invited their colleagues from neighbouring countries renowned for having



exploding population and scarce land and resources. You can see how the card of ethnicity played a great role in this ethnic conflict that ended up becoming an international conflict. Essentially, this Tutsi strip is the result of the demarcation of the country the colonial monsters did in 1884 during the scramble for and partition of Africa whose internal effects is the division of some societies in more than one country. Here we can see how divided and rule does not only end on people but also on their land. Again, if we consider the relationship between Tutsis and non-Tutsis in the region, chances are that ethnicity has a great role to play in this setting. Jackson (2006:109) argues that “Secret Council” of Tutsi elders obsessed with the “purity of their race,” which in Conflict Resolution Field is called “the chosen ones mentality.” Given that colonial monsters invented negative and toxic ethnicity to perpetuate exploitation based on superiority (for the exploiters) and inferiority (for exploited) complexes, one can see how toxic such ethnicity can be. Vlassenroot and Higgins (2005) argue that the DRC makes a good target for local opportunists due to the fact that, “there are natural resources of much greater value, and much more ‘lootable’ character, than agricultural or pastoral land” (p.119). This is in itself provides motivation for warlords to put their hands on whatever brings money quickly. Horowitz (1985 cited in Byrne and Irvin 2000: ix) observes that “ethnic conflict is at the centre of politics in divided societies.” The conflict in the DRC also has all hallmarks of divide and rule whereby Tutsis famously known as Banyamulenge have been playing an important role supported by Rwanda and Uganda based on sharing ethnic ties. Also important is the fact that after Kabila toppled Mobutu easily, there was created an assumption-cum-precedent that anybody with a good backing can topple the government and thereof controls the reins of power which directly accords him/her control over resources. In such a greedy and cutthroat situation, whoever that has numbers from “his people” can come to power and serve himself/herself with his people as it happened to Kabila after taking over after his forced ousted former dictator Mobutu whose army did not have enough numbers to defeat Kabila’s force.

## **Ethnoconflicts and resources**

The West has always benefitted from the conflicts in countries endowed with resources such as Angola the DRC, Liberia, and many more. Due to benefitting from the plundering of the DRC, the international community cares much about its interests even if doing so means trampling on the rights of victims in the DRC. As Montague (2002) argues, after the international community distanced itself, the invaders, and the warlords seized the opportunity of militarizing even the economy of the DRC transforming it into a combat economy. As Ballentine and Nitzschke (2005: 7) argue that such in the military or combat economy “the security apparatus of the state (military, paramilitary groups, police) and rebel groups, as well as domestic and foreign allows “conflict entrepreneurs” support and fuel the conflict in order to benefit from it as it has always been since the conflict broke out in the DRC. If we consider the fact that such institutions mentioned above, are run by men as it has been in a patriarchal society, gender exploitation becomes higher especially when rape and sexual exploitation are committed with impunity and as weapons of war due to the fact that the international community after distancing itself from the conflict, has always turned the blind eye. Again toxic ethnicity gives birth to another calamity namely gender violence. Once such indifference becomes the order of the day, chances of gender-related violence to be committed are high as Defeis (2008) notes that “Nothing discredits the United Nations more than the continuing sexual abuse of women and girls by soldiers belonging to its international peacekeeping missions (p.189) as it was evidenced in the East DRC recently. The international community needs to do justice equally and equitably otherwise such indifference and complicity can be misconstrued as international racism against Africa where the society is gendered and divided along sex and gender lines as argued above in the DRC.

Currently, the legacy and effects of divide and rule can be seen in politics in many affected countries in Africa whereby loyalty to whatever political party or group is misleadingly based on artificial and all-time-destructive ethnicity. There is “us versus them” (Byrne 2001) divide socially, politically and economically as Carter *et al* (2009)

argue that access to “land (access to other natural resources, notably oil and water)” is used as a tool of oppression based on ethnicity in many countries mentioned above, *inter alia*. In other words, you do not exist if you do not belong to “us”; and if you do, you are our enemy or a second class citizen in our country who is automatically an obstacle to *our wellbeing* and *development* which cannot be achieved without your underdevelopment. In such a situation and rationale, protagonists do not consciously become aware of; and whenever they become aware of does not accommodate the needs and humanity of those they deemed to be their enemies. They think it is the right thing for them to eliminate or maltreat their artificial enemies. So, in such lethargic way of doing things, *you* deserve to be gotten rid of by all means so that *we* can thrive and survive. When clear and sane mind is applied, those calling each other enemies are brothers and sisters who used to live like friends and partners in everything before the introduction of such obnoxious and poisonous system in place given that there is no recorded animosities among African communities that amounted to an apocalypse. Facing such a catch-22, ethnic ruling parties or groups tend to turn their enemies into second class citizens or inferior ones as de Paor (1971: xiii cited in Lijphart 1975: 89) notes that “in Northern Ireland Catholics are Blacks who happen to have white skins’ who are not Africans to denote how blackness is an anathema before white humans who are now preaching human equality based on human rights. This shows how artificial categorisations under divide and rule work. Despite, getting out in order to clearly substantiating our claims, as prior promised, this categorization shows how dynamic divide and rule can be. Lijphart wonders how Catholics can be perceived as black while they are not on tropic, and do not have non-white population (p.90). Lijphart goes on saying that the closest parallel Northern Ireland and other fragmented societies is South Africa during Apartheid under which blacks were the third or fourth class citizens however the situation has since changed in the two countries. Regarding the oppression and forced migration resulting from toxic ethnicity, Bose (1998) gives an example of Bosnia noting that, “By the end of 1992 Bosnia Serb forces seized two-thirds of Bosnia expelling hundreds of thousands of non-Serbs mainly Muslims but also Croats” (127). He goes on

noting that 2.3 million people more than a half of Bosnia's 1992 population of 4.4 million were driven out of their homes. This war and cleansing in the former Federation of Yugoslavia was between "us" and "them" and due to their perceived identity and enmity, Bosnia Serbs did not bother about the number of the people they killed, maimed or displaced or the magnitude of the carnage they were unleashing to others. One can say that once divided always divided if the victims do not put their acts together and resolve their problems.

Furthermore, ethnic and ethnopolitical conflicts resulting from divide and rule have since caused many mistrusts and misunderstandings among societies that used to live together harmoniously before the coming of colonialists when conflicts were solved without causing much loss as it happened after colonialism in some countries. Identity-based conflicts occurred and were experienced in many different places divide and rule was introduced to. Divide and rule—as a strategy of domination—changed names according to where and who used it. Again, the effects and aims of division were and remained the same to all colonised people almost in all places. It, among others resulted in the creation of animosities, artificial identities and differences. Furthermore, the effects of divide and rule and power struggles in Africa can be observed by applying social cubism theory to show how deeper and wider divide and rule strategy affected the colonised people in various countries and communities as far as ethnopolitical conflicts are concerned. To gauge how much deeper and wider divide and rule as a colonial strategy affected the countries or people to whom or to which it was introduced, social cubism theory applies well. Under social cubism, Byrne and Carter (1996) analyse six facets of the conflict namely demographics, economics, history, political factors, psychocultural factors and religion. Social cubism covers six facets of the society and shows how divide and rule use them to antagonises, divides and exploits the victims.

Demographics were used almost in all cases whereby the minority was favoured while the majority was sidelined, exploited and belittled not to mention being shunned in the administering of the colony something that forced them to capitulate and live with anger

and hatred against the *favoured ones*. Also, discriminating against the majority covered all areas such as provision of social services such as education and medication. In Rwanda, for example, Tutsis were favoured in the provision of education as it was for Kikuyu in Kenya. Along with demographics, economics was used whereby the minority was used to exploit the majority through ethnic favouritism. Jobs in the colonial governments and other privileges went to the favoured groups something that caused hatred and vengeance as was witnessed in Burundi and Rwanda after the two countries got their independence whereby the majority started persecuting the minority. In a sense, the victims became perpetrators and vice versa. Essentially, the system revolves around the hinge of ethnicity whereby the majority are left out economically, and politically.

The history of the colonised people was used to pitting one against another. For instance, as argued above, in Rwanda, Tutsis were made to believe that they were intruders or invaders who settled in Rwanda 900 A.D compared to Hutus who appeared in Rwanda 2000 B.C (Byrne and Carter 2009: 130-131).

Before the coming in of colonisers, Africans, for example, generally lived peacefully despite having small-scale conflicts (which are normal in any society) that did not tear them apart as it happened after the coming of colonialism with its divide and rule strategy that left Africa divided and weakened. Lonsdale (1981:139) cited in

Zartman (1994) shows how solidified and peaceful Africans were before the introduction of divide and rule which led to many ethnic and ethno-political conflicts as argued above in that conflict among African societies did not record any conflict of great magnitude comparably.

In trying to weaken, and cheaply run colonies, colonisers, especially, British colonial rulers, invented the divide-and-rule strategy which affected the colonies negatively as Carter *et al* (2009: 159) note that "...both communities have been deeply influenced by the strategy of "divide and rule," promoted during European colonialization," . Carter *et al* (2009) refer to Hutus and Tutsis which during the 1994 genocide. Divide and rule was not only introduced to Rwanda. Other African countries suffered or are still suffering from the same vice save at different magnitude. So, the first thing

divide and rule did was to create antagonism between or among groups based on what they perceived to be their slight and immaterial differences. In so doing, colonisers created artificial identities and differences based on physical or biological looks or historical realities of the groups. Such artificial reinvention of the groups added new identities to the groups which took them as real while they actually were not. For example, Tutsis in Rwanda, and North and South Sudanese in the then Sudan, were made to believe that they were superior to the Hutus based on the length and shape of their noses. Tutsis took this to be a true part of their identity thereafter. Arguably, they acquired a new and fake identity. Once an identity is established, it is hard to demolish or alter it; and it is taken among the values of the group as Goffman (2009: 6) in his book, *Notes on the management of spoiled identity* argues that “Such people see themselves as unquestionably fit into a select social category,” . It is recently after the 1994 genocide in Rwanda that both groups saw themselves differently so as to start to deconstruct such artificial identity German, Belgium and French colonisers created under divide and rule. Currently, in Rwanda, nobody is referred to his or her ethnicity. Instead, they are all referred to as Rwandans which is good and the first step of deconstructing toxic ethnicity. However, this approach may work temporarily if we consider what happened in the former Federation of Yugoslavia after the death of Marshal Josip Broz Tito, former president, who abolished ethnicity which surfaced soon after his death. Whether the *de-ethnicization* will work or not in Rwanda, it is too early to tell. Again, conflict resolution academics, practitioners and professional need to keep an eye on Rwanda’s experiment on deconstructing ethnicity to see which way it will go in the near future after President Paul Kagame—who is instrumentally behind it—hands power over to another Rwandan as president. The irony with Rwandan experiment however is the fact that despite deconstructing ethnicity, it is still used to refer to the victims of genocide which in essence is rekindling it. This can be wrongly taken by Hutus as the discrimination against them and uplifting Tutsis if not reinforcing the vice due to the fact that the deconstruction of tribal sentiments and identity was carried on by one group.

Another important fact is that it takes long time for groups to realize how artificial some of what they perceive to be their identity is. Sometimes, such awakening happens after miseries as it is for the case of Rwandan genocide or Kosovo ethnic cleansing.

Moreover, in applying divide and rule, European-colonial monsters played one community against another while favouring the minority as opposed to the majority. Such a strategy worked well where there were some differences or historical animosities such as in the case of what British colonial masters called ‘warrior tribe e.g. Zulu in South Africa and Ndebele in Zimbabwe. The duo were favoured, thus; they had more rights than other communities that were excluded. Wolff (2006) calls “second-class status” those whom coloniser excluded. To make exploitation easy to their advantage, colonisers favoured the minority against the majority due to the fact that they wanted to run their colonies at a low cost. By dividing their colonised people, colonizers were able to get some secrets that enabled them to tame both groups. Through the antagonism created, groups were ready to betray one another as a strategy of winning colonial favours at the expenses of their enemy groups.

### **Reinventing new people and creating animosity**

Sometimes, divide and rule was called indirect rule whereby the favoured community was appointed and supported to vicariously rule the communities that were not favoured as it was in Rwanda in which Carter *et al* (2009) note that, “Germans found it logical for the Tutsis to rule Hutus [...] they decided to administer Rwanda by indirect rule system” (p.136). In so doing, Germans started what is known as *Tutsification* which means to support Tutsis to occupy all important positions in the country which culminated in the 1994 Rwandan genocide. Ironically, Rwandan genocide was only blamed on Hutus but not Germans who enacted this system, or Tutsis whom Germans used to rule and exploit the majority Hutus. Essentially, animosities and hatred between Hutus and Tutsis were created to enable Germany, and those who followed after them to smoothly run the colony. Under divide and rule, colonial monsters created “artificial races with artificial identities” which segregated and hated one

another for colonisers' easy preying. After Germany was defeated in the Second World War; Rwanda was handed over to Belgian colonial rule. Essentially, Belgium went on with the same policy of division the Germans had created. As Carter *et al* (Ibid) note that, "They (Belgians) perpetuated the *Tutsification* of Rwanda," in that they favoured the minority Tutsis as opposed to the majority Hutus. This policy created enmity that became the root cause of the 1994 genocide. Tutsis were made to believe that they were superior to Hutus and vice versa. Such dichotomy created mistrust, vengeance and fierce division among the people who used to live together peacefully before the arrival of colonisers.

Arguably, as noted above, racism was introduced based on things such as the length of the nose (Burundi and Rwanda), history, religion and region (Nigeria) among others. Byrne and Carter (2009: 159) note, "Regardless of which ethnic groups arrived first, both communities have been deeply influenced by the strategy of "divide and rule" promoted during European colonization." Such artificial and farfetched reasons were applied almost in all countries that have faced ethnoconflicts for example Kenya that has suffered hugely from tribalism. After the colonisers left, they made sure that they left division so that they could use it to weaken and keep on exploiting their former colonies. Nigeria provides an ideal example of divide countries that colonial masters left abaft. If anything, such perpetual exploitation was enhanced by dividing African into small and weak states during the scramble for, and partition of Africa of 1884 which itself was a geographical and political divide and rule strategy towards the whole continent. Many ethnic groups found themselves divided between two or more countries as it was for some African ethnic groups such as Masai (between Kenya and Tanzania), Makonde (among Malawi, Mozambique and Tanzania), Nyasa (between Malawi and Tanzania) and many more. This divide and rule was and still is used by some African rulers. This was established by Acemoglu *et al* (2004) who argue that "the logic of the divide-and-rule strategy [is] to enable a ruler to bribe politically pivotal groups off the equilibrium path, ensuring that he can remain in power against challenges," (p.164). If anything, this is the tool European colonisers used during and after colonialism that they left after handing over the



colonies to black colonialists. Thanks to divide and rule, Africa has, since independence—played the role of [has] suffered greatly under black colonialists who used and still use the same strategy of divide and rule to remain in power. What African black colonialists did was to turn divide and rule upside down so as to become rule and divide in that the one dividing the people so as to rule them comes to power then uses it to divide his people. So, too, geographical and political divide and rule affected the reunification of Africa which has become impossible due to the fact that many post-colonial African leaders championed it and failed because African countries were, and still are divided even after the colonial monsters left over five decades ago. Divide and rule which later became rule and divide has always been a stumbling block against the total unification of Africa. Colonial puppets and cronies such as Mobutu Seseseko (the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda (Malawi), Jomo Kenyatta (Kenya), Omar Bongo (Gabon), Denis Sassou Nguesso (Congo) and many more made sure that Africa remained divided so that they could safely remain in power provided that their colonial masters supported and protected their corrupt regimes that revolved around ethnicity. Power to such puppets was the means and the end that could be safeguarded by dividing their people. Differently from the colonial monsters, when African rulers got in power then started dividing their people which helped them to remain in power for long periods. Zimbabwe's president Robert Mugabe is a recent example of divide and rule perpetrated by African rulers. He used divisive tactics to rule Zimbabwe for over three centuries. First, he divided Zimbabweans between freedom fighters and collaborators. Once this ploy started to lose its wand, he furnished the ploy by dividing Zimbabweans along pro-revolution and anti-revolution. By exploiting ideological and colour divides, Mugabe took farms from white farmers and gave them to his cronies by leaving out all those he perceived to his political enemies out. However, land redistribution in Zimbabwe has its backers especially those who benefitted from it and those who think that Mugabe's move aimed at redressing Africans after suffering from landlessness for many decades. So it depends on how you look at it arguably. His ploy worked. For, soon after taking land from white, some

Zimbabweans even some African leaders supported him after viewing him as a true Africanist who stood to assuage colonial evils. Voters in Zimbabwe, too, supported his policy so as to survive in the elections that followed the seizure of land from whites.

### **The camouflage of divide and rule and blaming the victims by sparing the perpetrators**

Mugabe's divided-and-rule policies are now aped by an ultra-nationalist party in South Africa, the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) which is campaigning asking South Africans especially blacks to vote for it so that it can take land from Boers and other Apartheid era privileged groups and redistribute it to blacks. Once again, divide and rule is at work. British colonial monsters handed the country to the minority Boers after colonizing the country for 350 years. When the Boers took the reins of power, they introduced Apartheid policies which left the majority blacks in the cold. To get away with murder, Boers formed a few Bantustans which acted as their puppets in sabotaging struggle for liberation in South Africa. Now that South Africa is free, just like other African countries, some elites such as the EFF are using the same tactic of dividing people so as to get in power. What the EFF is doing is nothing but dividing south Africans along economic status. This time around, the EFF, like it was for the Zimbabwe African National Union–Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) it is using racism to achieve its goals (Mhango 2016). Although the ANC seems to be reluctant to buy into racial politics, if voters vote the EFF whose followership is growing tremendously, chances are the in the near future, ANC will follow suit in order to survive politically especially after committing many errors in power. Although it is early to tell, South Africa without visionary leaders like Mandela, chances for it to become another Zimbabwe as far as land issues are concerned. The situation is still the same in Namibia where a few white settlers own more land than blacks. Since her independence, Namibia has been struggling with the land issue although not at the same magnitude as it is the case in Zimbabwe. Adams and Howell (2001) note that:

Malawi has just embarked on a land redistribution programme, which targets large, foreign-owned estates for the resettlement of the landless poor. Land redistribution has been a central plank of land policy in Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa since their transition to majority rule, (p.1).

Furthermore, divide and rule applied even after independence whereby the then two superpowers, the United States (US) and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) divided other countries based on their influence; and used their allies especially at the United Nations (UN) whenever votes were needed for passing some issues in which they had interests. You could see this schism between pro-capitalist-African countries and pro-communist-African countries. Due to rendering services to super powers under the cold war, despite robbing the DRC, Mobutu succeeded to remain in power by using the same trick of playing elites against each other topped up with financial and military assistance and support from Western countries for the exchange of cheaper minerals and resources. Those who do not bother to read the history tend to blame ethnic groups in-fighting for power and resources as it currently is in the DRC where many atrocities have been committed. Again, warlords plunder resources that end up being sold to former colonial masters without being blamed or held accountable in this conspiracy that has been going on for many years. The blame game has gone on almost in all African countries facing ethnic conflicts. In Nigeria, for example, when Biafra sought to secede from Nigeria, it was blamed on being used by communists. The British who created the mess in Nigeria were the first to either blame or jump in to resolve the conflict. Such mentality of blaming those in ethnoconflicts can be seen in the words of Post (1968: 26) who argues, "Nigeria has joined the Congo (Kinshasa) as the sick man of Africa. The high hopes of 1960-62 became the forebodings of 1964-65; now there seems little to feel but sickness of heart at the death of one's friends and despair at the end of a dream." Post holds Nigeria accountable for her ethnoconflicts without mentioning the British that created them. This has been the take of the world to blame victims alone without including those who invented divide and rule which caused all these conflicts.

Differently, Post (Ibid) goes on showing how the British created all ethnoconflicts that Nigeria has ever experienced. He observes that: “When Britain carved out Nigeria for itself it created, in the words of one of the more enlightened colonial experts, ‘perhaps the most artificial of the many administrative units created in the course of the European occupation of Africa” (p.27).

Post shows the contradictions ethnoconflicts draw even for those who analyse them. He started by blaming Nigeria for its failure that makes Nigeria look like another failed state of the time, DRC (then Congo Kinshasa before it was renamed Zaire then DRC). Post realized his mistake of hurling insults at, and blames on Nigeria so as to admit that Britain is the one to blame for creating such an artificial political entity so as to foster her interests even after attaining independence as it has ever been for many African countries. Aghedo (2014) concurs with Post arguing that “the colonial state was largely created to serve the economic interests of the imperialists, helping to ensure law and order and guarantee an environment that enabled the colonialists to expand their interests” (p. 2). Such adherence to law and order would have been impossible without divide and rule. Aghedo goes far deeper so as to connect Boko Haram, an Islamic fundamentalist terrorist group operating currently in Nigeria, Chad and Cameroon, to divide and rule whereby Muslims in Nigeria were left out of colonial education system so as to become disgruntled after independence arguing that “the foot soldiers of both groups have essentially been the unemployed, poor and uneducated. However, unlike the Niger Delta militants which comprised essentially the Ijaw people, members of Boko Haram were initially drawn from the Kanuri nationality” (p.5). Again, looking at how the Boko Haram insurgency is misconstrued as an Islamic move against Christianity and secular government, one may underscore how divide and rule is safely and elusively still entrenched in Nigeria’s ethnoconflicts.

Whereas British colonisers used communities against others based on their ethnic history, they expanded the practice so as to include more elements such as ... Christopher (1988: 233) notes that “the simple Christian-Heathen or English-foreigner dichotomy was replaced by ever more elaborate classifications as governments

divided and re-divided populations into discrete groups, on the basis of linguistics, religion, ethnicity and skin colour.” Instead of dividing Nigeria according to the ethnic lines, they divided by religion and region.

One may wonder how British divide and rule created many conflicts in the world today. In the Israel-Palestine conflict, this strategy played an important role that culminated into the protracted conflict that has been going on for many years. How divide and rule played out in Israel-Palestine conflict is obvious as Shlaim (1995: 293) notes that on the one hand:

The central charge is that Britain armed and secretly encouraged her Arab allies, and especially her client, King Abdullah of Jordan, to invade Palestine upon expiry of the British Mandate and do battle with the Jewish state as soon as it came into the world.

On the other hand, there was a secret agreement between Britain and France to divide the Middle East. Shlaim (Ibid) notes that “Britain knew and approved of this secret Hashemite-Zionist agreement to divide up Palestine between themselves, not along the lines of the U.N. partition plan” (p. 297). As if this was not enough, the same Britain, in conjunction with America, has portrayed itself as an international mediator-cum-guarantor whereby Tony Blair, Britain’s former prime minister was appointed a Middle East envoy for the Quartet, a diplomatic group consisting of the United Nations, the European Union, the United States and Russia. Once again, this show how lethal divide and rule can be especially through the camouflage it takes even today in the Israel-Palestine conflict. Ironically, former colonial masters that created the conflict are still safe without any blame while the victims are always blamed and manipulated. Refer to how Tony Blair, former Britain Prime Minister was appointed a Middle East mediator while the conflict was created by his country. Such manipulation can be seen not only in Israel-Palestine conflict but also in Northern Ireland where Marxist claim that “the capitalist class, both British and local, has artificially fomented the conflict in Northern Ireland” (Whyte (1978: 258). The

conflict in Northern Ireland between Catholics and Protestant has gone on for a long time. It is among the longest conflict of this century. For those who know the origin of the conflict, this is ridiculous. As said in the beginning, it is easier to blame the victims than the oppressors simply because the oppressors have all tools and means of manipulation such as using academics and mass media to defend their position. Like Post (1968) and Whyte (1978) discovers the contradiction of his statement. He presents another view from non-Marxist who argues that, “Britain based her partition policy on divergences she herself created and fostered among the Irish people” (p. 267). Arguably, if this is nature of how academics look at ethnoconflicts, chances of blaming game to go on while those who actually enacted the conflicts are left out are high. Academics need to rewrite the true history of divide and rule and propose that countries that created these conflicts and those who benefitted from divide and rule be forced to redress their victims. This will not only do justice to the victims but it will also create a precedent for others thinking about or planning to do the same in any form to think twice. So, too, by redressing the victims, the world will be erasing the anomalies and ills resulting from unfair distribution and use of resources and wealth. The DRC provides an ideal example of how Africa has not benefitted from its resources. We think; redressing Congolese who have always suffered from conflicts resulting from the urge to the government and militants to control resources especially minerals.

### **Assimilation inhalation and perpetuation**

Although Britain seems to have created many more conflicts than other colonisers due to having many colonies, she was not alone in using divide and rule as a strategy of easily running her colonies. The French used the same, however, under a different name. They called their policy or strategy *assimilation* whereby a few select of colonised people were offered privileges and being initiated into French culture so as to be perceived more civilised and advanced than those who were excluded. This created division among colonised people. As Lewis (1962: 129) notes: “It was also a reaffirmation of the ideal of “assimilation” to the French nation as the logical outcome of the

French mission *civilisatrice*". To make sure that colonised people could not be united and fight against French colonialism, French colonialists introduced *intraracism* as Aglion (1944) notes that "the territories administered by France on the Dark Continent may be divided into two separate and distinct parts:

1). "White Africa which in some quarters they call "European Africa" (see Mawere and Mubaya, 2016) and;

2). "Black Africa" (Aglion 1944: 78) in that white Africa is the Maghreb and black Africa is Sub-Sahara Africa (SSA). Aglion goes on arguing that "the administration of territories under protectorate is carried on by the French in an indirect manner" (Ibid). This "indirect manner" is the same indirect rule or divide and rule, as British called it. Essentially, indirect or divide and rule was aimed at using conflicting and opposing indigenous people to rule others in order to minimize the costs of running colonies. Aglion calls this system "sort of attempt to profit by the national disaster" (p.79) for colonised nations. By dividing the colonised people in the groups—ethnic or colour and region—colonialists created what Byrne and Irvin (YR: 78) call "old historical rivalries, revenge and fear" which resulted in the current ethno-political conflicts that Africa is suffering from. For, such "old historical rivalries, revenge and fear are used by elites in the groups to maintain the solidarity of the group even by dividing them from their enemies so that they can rule the groups easily, cheaply and safely.

As argued above, divide and rule was given different names however its spirit and intention remained the same, dividing and weakening colonisers so as to easily and perpetually exploit them. Portuguese called it *assimilado* which is assimilation in English and French. De Almeida (2001) shows how the same people were divided into different groups with different identities noting that "Portuguese was for the *assimilados*, (also see Mawere 2014) Tetum, Timorese local language) was for the gentios or heathen" (p. 599). Such artificiality based on linguistic superimposed dissimilarity shows how the same people were excommunicated from each other so as to become foreign and enemies to each other wantonly. Looking at the terms and language used, one can discover that they have their origin from Christianity which, like any other foreign religions, divided people in

order to exploit them. Such miscommunication caused a lot of mistrusts and misunderstandings altogether.

More on divide and rule, under Apartheid, South Africa Boers created Bantustans as the means of weakening African resistance against their notorious rule. This divide-and-rule strategy worked well for the favour of oppressors in South Africa. For, African collaborators such as heads of Bantustans like Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi (Kwazulu), Kaiser Daliwonga Matanzima (Transkei), Kgosi Lucas Manyane Mangope (Bophuthatswana), Lennox Sebe (Ciskei), Chief Patrick Ramaano Mphephu (Venda) and others opposed the struggles for the liberation of South Africa. For them, the united and liberated South Africa meant losing their artificial powers. And truly, once the National Party (NP) lost power to the African National Congress (ANC), the new democratic government abolished the Bantustans and those presiding over them lost their powers. To see how dangerous and ferocious divide and rule can be, Buthelezi's party, the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) was used by Apartheid regime to kill the followers of Mandela's ANC during the struggles for the liberation of South Africa. Even after attaining its freedom, South Africa still faced the wrath of divide and rule as Mzamane (1996: 12) note that, "Inkatha argued that the series was a political ploy by the Mandela regime to denigrate the IFP (Inkatha Freedom Party) as a bunch of killers in the violence that plagued the country for four years." Once, again, this shows how divide and rule crossed political divide so as to be applied by Africans to discriminate, sabotage, divide and hate each other as it is in the case above whereby the IFP saw Mandela as an obstacle for its existence in South Africa even after independence. Again, when such misunderstandings and acrimonies occur, the victims of divide and rule are blamed but not the architects of the same. Interestingly, IFP's fighters were used by Boers to fight the ANC something that reduced the danger Apartheid soldiers would be exposed to. So, divide and rule through creating Bantustans helped Boers to get willing fighters who could do their dirty laundry easily and at no cost. Essentially, the Boers divided South Africa the same way the Berlin Conference did to Africa.



## What should be done?

In sum, it can be argued that divide and rule worked during colonial times, and it still works many years thereafter. Essentially, divide and rule as a strategy seems to fit in colonialism as well as in imperialism as the means of weakening people so as to control them easily and for long time as it is the case of African countries currently whereby their economies have gone serving and servicing those of their former colonial monsters. Therefore, many ethnic and ethno-political conflicts that Africa is witnessing today have hallmarks of colonialism; and they must be blamed on colonial monsters instead of the victims. Through divide and rule, many artificial and fake groups and identities were created be they ethnic, political or religious as we have seen in social cubism how divide and rule can apply to all six facets of the doctrine. Social cubism is still relevant today in addressing the consequence, tactics and legacy of divide and rule. This strategy still revolves around the six facets of social cubism among others. What seems to have changed is the fact that when divide and rule was invented, colonised people used to be victims. However, after gaining their freedom, some rulers of independent Africa countries metamorphosed themselves into new colonial monsters that used the same strategy to weaken the solidarity of their people that would be used democratically against them. To make things worse, divide and rule seems to be at work as a double-edged sword in Africa whereby African rulers are using it to divide their people so as to remain in power serving their former colonial monsters. Currently, we have terrorist groups such as al-Shabaab (Somalia), Boko Haram (Nigeria) and others fighting against other Africans to be able to come to power so that they can run countries under their foreign borrowed *diktats*. This can be termed as religious divide and rule which is another type of neocolonialism Africa needs to fight vigorously and timely before it grows even bigger. It took many years for religious groups seeking political power to surface due to the fact that during the colonial era, colonial rules suffocated them. Under imperialism as the extension of colonialism whose success story was enhanced by divide and rule, religious groups are using the same strategy of dividing Africans in two groups namely Muslims and

none to gain popularity and claim territories. Arguably, African politics—in many countries—is still revolving around ethnicity as it was created by colonial strategy of divide and rule. This can be witnessed when one refers to what happened in the 2007 general elections whereby the Post-Election Violence (PEV) resulting from ethnicity left hundreds dead. Goldstein and Rotich (2008: 4) note the cause of the PEV—as it is known in Kenya—arguing that “Following Kenya’s independence from Great Britain, much of the best land went to Kenyatta’s Kikuyu ethnic group, instead of the groups to whom it belonged before the British arrived.” It is interesting to note that in Kenya, British favoured Kikuyus despite being the biggest ethnic group in the country. Again, once it is compared with the rest 41 ethnic groups Kikuyus become minority. In Uganda, the current government is accused of favouring President’s ethnic group (Ankole) as opposed to others. The same applies in the neighbouring Rwanda where the government is accused of being formed by one community that took power after genocide despite abolishing ethnic identities. So, too, psychoculturally, one may argue that Kikuyus are farmers that prove to be more peaceful than nomads and animal keepers who happen to be warriors. So, when British colonisers arrived in Kenya, they used land favours as the means of dividing Kenyans along ethnic lines so as to create hatred and difference that went on even after Kenya became independent in 1963. Kenya’s PEV fits in the social cubism analysis whereby economic, history, psychoculture, demographics among others. To resolve ethnoconflicts mentioned above, we need to revisit their history so that we can make things right.

We, thus, propose that there must be mechanisms that will force all countries that benefitted from colonialism to redress their victims so that:

- 1). It can be a lesson for others and it can act as a deterrent;
- 2). The redress will empower the victims economically so as to provide some services to their people especially social education on creating awareness on divide and rule and the consequences victims have suffered since it was invented and introduced to many colonies;
- 3). Declare colonialism a crime as it was for Apartheid that was illegalized after the ANC took over in 1994 and;

4). Change the current international system of doing business whereby former colonies are still playing the same role of serving and servicing the economies of Western countries.

Importantly, African countries whose colonisation resulted from their trust to the colonisers should stop trusting their oppressors thinking they can bring about change and solutions to their problems as far as violent conflicts are concerned. It is sad and even ridiculous to note that Africans know why they were perpetually colonised, yet they still trust the same people to solve the conflicts they enacted in order to go on benefitting from exploiting Africa!

Suffice it to say, divide-and-rule strategy colonisers invented and used to rule resulted into many ethnic and ethno-political conflicts Africa evidences today. It is time academics, professionals, practitioners and all dealing with conflict to start thinking about linking those who created divide and rule to the effects of ethnic and ethno-political. So doing, may help in avoiding the repetition or re-enactment of the same in the future due to the fact that colonialism and imperialism change shape and names according to time and situations. Divide and rule is among political gimmicks that make the world unsafe and violent due to its effects and legacy altogether. To live in a peaceful world, we need to address this exploitative colonial and political tool so that the awareness gotten out of it maybe can help victims to think about reconciliation among themselves and deconstructing the *status quo*. We have seen how European colonisers, and later post-colonial rulers in Africa, used the same method to keep on exploiting and ruling the victims of the strategy in various countries cited as examples in this chapter. It is our duty to step in and help in arresting, alleviating, and if possible, put a full stop to it by making our people aware of it. For, going on with it will cause more harm especially on Africa whose development was arrested and curtailed for many decades.

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# **Managing Politics of Knowledge Production in Africa: Exploiting Indigenous Knowledge Systems for Increasing Synergy between Community Development and Education Sectors**

*Costain Tandi; Munyaradzi Mawere; and Tapuwa R. Mubaya*

## **Introduction**

*“There is no easy walk to the mountaintop of success. You will have to pass through protracted struggles against pain, criticism and antagonism” (Munyaradzi Mawere 2016).*

It is indeed a truism that history, besides being a highly contested terrain, is a product of a struggle of some kind. As such, depending on the dominant ideas represented by the dominant social forces at a given moment, history will inevitably create institutions and processes after its image. For instance, history will always ensure that scientific research and new knowledge and discoveries of the human mind are conditioned to serve the interests of the dominant social forces (Maimela, 2007) – those at the helm of political leadership of the time. In like manner, knowledge production, especially in African universities, is influenced [in-]directly by social relations and, thus, it is a continuous struggle between the oppressor and the oppressed or between the perceived superior and the inferior. The rivalry between the oppressor and the oppressed besides assuming different forms, also changes names as dictated by different historical epochs.

Admittedly, the war for supremacy in all human endeavours between the Global North and Africa has since time immemorial assumed different names ranging from the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade to colonialism through imperialism to neo-colonialism, but nonetheless with the same agenda; that of ensuring the total submission of the Africans. Drawing examples from the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the rivalry has been made more elaborate in the educational sector

(particularly the field of knowledge production) presumably more than any other spheres, where the control of knowledge production has become more of a political activity than it is an intellectual endeavour.

Sadly, on the entire African continent, the contemporary discourse on knowledge production is complex and highly controversial. This is largely due to the fact that knowledge production and power are closely related. For Weiler (2000), the close and often intricate relationship between knowledge production and power manifests itself as an instrument of reciprocal legitimisation. This resonates with Berger and Luckmann (1967:102) who advance the argument that current knowledge and science have virtually become the currency of choice in legitimising state power. Substantiating the above point, Weiler further notes that just as knowledge legitimises power, it also derives a great deal of its own legitimisation from the decisions of the state – decisions on, for example, what is to be learned and taught at schools, what sort of knowledge is required to qualify candidates for public offices and careers, and, what sort of research should enjoy public funding. In all these and many other decisions that are subject to state authority, *one* type of knowledge is typically given priority over *another* and is accorded special standing and legitimacy (Ibid). In this case, the dominant knowledge is/was frequently Western knowledge, which overpowered and dismissed the ‘other’s’ importance (Barua, 2010).

It is crucial to note that, more often than not, it is those who have the power to dominate, subjugate and/ or colonise others whose knowledge becomes reified. To this end, the worldviews and perspectives of ‘others’ – those who are on the margins of the global village – are sidelined and vilified as ‘traditional,’ ‘irrational,’ ‘backward’ and ‘obsolete’ (Shizha, 2009:12). As a result, the rich traditions and culture which define things as “African” are relegated to play second fiddle to the incursion of the globalised Euro-American culture (Ibid). This is the reason why even today Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) are undermined and undervalued in both education and development in Africa: they are paying a bloody price for the beliefs of the “superiors”. From the foregoing, it is apparent that those in power tend to influence and



control the way knowledge is produced, used and disseminated. Thus, knowledge production and dissemination operate within specific political trajectories and ideologies that may constrain or promote it. Contrarily, those without power end up being passive consumers of knowledge produced elsewhere, and such is the case in Africa. Fundamental to note is the fact that the Global North has since its contact with Africa, strategically positioned itself politically, economically and educationally to the extent that it now assumes the self-imposed role of controlling, dictating and approving the production of knowledge in Africa as indeed across the globe. This is being propagated and perpetuated in a subtle manner which is not only difficult to challenge, but also complex to address as the Global North has yet again assumed the position of both the referee and player hence it is extremely difficult to beat .

Against this backdrop, it can be argued that as long as the Global North continues to dictate the contents of the educational curriculum as well as owning and controlling the so-called influential publishing houses and journals, Africa will forever remain underdeveloped (Mubaya, *et al*: 2016). As that may be, as long as Europe dominates over Africa there is no way the latter's education systems can gain recognition. As noted by Asante (1987), any interpretation of Africa must begin at once to dispense with the notion that, in all things, Europe is the teacher and Africa is the pupil. Emphatically, Africa will not develop sustainably if it continues in the guise of mimicry as a copycat of the Global North especially in the education sector. This line of thinking reverberates with Gran's (1986) who proffers the argument that the dismal failure of development policy in Africa is due to an externally imposed knowledge system that has summarily ignored the legitimacy of local, grassroots knowledge.

Upon this realisation, it is the contention of this chapter that Africa's stunted development agenda is largely due to the trajectories of knowledge production and politics associated with it which is largely inclined to and indeed in favour of the Global North. In view of this, the present chapter advances the argument that knowledge production and power are closely connected in a reciprocal and symbiotic manner hence the Global North (which is on the echelons of political and economic power) have the capacity and sole privilege

of deciding and dictating the type, content and quality of knowledge to be consumed and disseminated across the globe. In light of this, the chapter seeks to explore how African Universities can harness and integrate IKS in the educational curriculum as a way of making education relevant to the communities. It is sympathetic to note that the education that is being offered by most African universities is out of context and divorced from the everyday needs of Africa. It is out of this realisation that the present chapter seeks to influence African policy makers in the education sector to consider crafting a home grown educational curriculum that offers solutions to African context based problems. The chapter acknowledges that while this is an enormous task, African academia and intelligentsias should rescue the continent from the quagmire of being academically swallowed by the manoeuvring Global North's educational machinations which are largely contrary to Africa's contextual needs. The chapter notes with regret that Africa's diverse problems are rooted in the inherited colonial educational structure which was tailor made to sideline, marginalise and completely uproot the African from his/her own culture and context. This was achieved through a series of carefully thought out and well calculated plans which seemingly appear to be logical and beneficial to the Africans yet a closer scrutiny of these plans exposes the ultra-motives and sinister thinking embedded in these actions.

### **An exposition of Africa's current educational philosophy**

The current education system in most African countries dates back to the colonial period hence we can safely argue that it was and still is an appendage of the Global North, particularly the European former colonisers. It is pathetic to note that the curriculum which was designed in Europe and America to address certain contextual problems has been transplanted wholesomely on the African continent irrespective of the ideological differences and settings. Arguably, the education system in Africa can best be understood through historical and hermeneutical lenses. Consequently, in order to gain insight into the perceived politics involved in the production of knowledge particularly in African universities, we need to critically

reflect on how the current education system finds its way in Africa. This can only be made possible through unravelling and dissecting the historical matrix of Africa right through its three common major historical epochs namely, pre-colonial, colonial and contemporary. In doing this we are cognisant of the fact that Africa does not have a uniform and linear developmental pattern. We are only doing this on the pretext that with the exception of Ethiopia, almost all the other African countries passed through these three major historical phases.

### ***The pre-colonial era***

It is important to set the record straight that education existed in Africa long before the continent was colonised or even before the commencement of the slave trade. Indeed, prior to colonialism Africans in general had their own peculiar ways of attaining knowledge and confronting life issues (Shizha, 2013). This widely known fact has been noted by many scholars on Africa such as Chinua Achebe, George James, Zizek, Walter Rodney, Ngugi wa Thiongo, Wole Soyinka, Okot P'Bitek, Kwasi Wiredu, and Molefi K. Asante, among others. We may not be far wrong in making a standing observation that before the advent of colonialism African education was designed to solve the different existential problems as well as to serve the interests of the African populace. However, it is important to point out that this mode of education did not follow any comprehensive and formal curricula as is the case today. In fact, the African curricula did not exist as documents that we see on modern age educational institutions such as the modern schools. As rightly noted by Ocitti (1994) pedagogically, African education encompassed both instructional and non-instructional models of learning, which may be termed formal, informal and unconscious. That said, knowledge, skills and attitudes were *mainly* passed from generation to generation orally in the African societies (see Mosweunyane 2013).

It is also fundamental to note that this form of knowledge was scientific and as intricate as any other from other parts of the world. As noted by Emeagwali (2006) Africans while interacting with their environment and transforming various raw materials overtime, arrived at various hypotheses about nature, the natural world and

society. The fabrication of metallic tools and implements, textile production, traditional medicine or food processing, involved the application of various techniques, principles, and propositions arrived at through observation of the environment and experimentation at various levels (ibid). This qualifies as education if we are to borrow a definition by Moumouni as cited by Koma (1976) that education is everything that prepares the young people for either integration in a given specific society with the aim of perpetuating the established values and norms of such society or transforming and changing such values and norms. By and large, most learning that occurred in Africa was necessitated to meet the exigencies of the whole society through training of its individual members either in groups or on individual basis. For Vanqa (1995), training was intended to enable an individual to play a useful role in society. Kwasi Wiredu, one of the first African philosophers, insisted that Africa had very wise and philosophical persons, from whom we could learn a lot, especially if we paid attention to the nuances of the meanings of concepts in African languages (1980). We add that Europeans in pre-colonial Africa exalted and appropriated written word as stupendous while dismissing the early forms of education which were indeed largely based on orality.

### ***The colonial education system in Africa***

The infiltration of Western forces during colonialism facilitated the obtrusion of Western knowledge systems into African societies, which undermined the essentiality of African indigenous knowledge systems and destroyed the zeal in Africans to modernise and ameliorate their systems (Mosweunyane 2013). In fact, the colonialists imposed their categories of thought which unfortunately became objectified and universalised (Mubaya, *et al*, 2016). Consequently, any form of knowledge that did not conform to their model was deemed irrational and unworthy of scholarship (Ani, 2013). The denigration of African-oriented epistemology in contemporary academic discourse in Africa is consequent from a long history of racial debasement of the humanity and rationality of Africans as well as the historical Global North's superiority complex (Mubaya, *et al*, 2016). Hitherto, in the context of the colonial

relationship between Africa and the Global North, African epistemology was degradingly deemed irrational and unscientific because it was allegedly opined to be muddled with emotions, religious beliefs, intuitions and myths (Hallen, 2004:29; Laleye, 2002:87). Resultantly, the superiority context of the colonial powers meant that they were unwilling to find meaning in the ideas, values and systems that run athwart to theirs. The result of such repression, misrepresentations and misinterpretations is that, until now, interpreters from the Global North as well as African analysts have been using categories and conceptual systems which depend on the Global North's epistemological order (Shizha, 2013; Mudimbe, 1988). In short, the colonial education in Africa deliberately ignored to indigenise the educational curriculum and instead perpetuated educational colonialism (cf. wa Thiongo, 1986; Achebe, 1958). This means that the advent of colonialism in Africa marked the beginning of epistemic violence against the people and education systems on the continent. It [colonialism] shattered the progress, possibilities and innovative potentials of Africa's epistemological frontiers by perpetuating the Western forms of knowledge which were applied out of context in the guise of all-size-fits-all.

This may explain why the dominant education from the Global North has outrightly failed to transform and develop the African continent. This may also explain why Africa is the poorest continent on earth yet the one with the largest concentration of resources (Mawere, 2015). It is not an exaggeration to assert that educationally, Africa is still a slave of the Global North. This is evidenced by the fact that the imperial colonies recommended the setting of university education in line with structures established at home. For instance, the 1936 De La Warr Report and the Asquith Commission on higher education in the British colonies of 1943 recommended the setting up of university colleges in association with the University of London (Nyanchoga, 2014). In addition, the university colleges that were set up were subjected to certain conditions indicating lack of autonomy for the local institutions. This lack of autonomy in itself entails lack of freedom, which though subtle brings with it some form of violence, in this case, epistemic violence against the pedagogies of the sub-Altern. Zizek (2008) captures this well in his argument that there

is violence inherent in globalisation, in capitalism and fundamentalism yet because of the focus on visible individual agents and fanatical crowds, the invisible violence is not that much noticed. Thus, while other scholars focus on violence by visible agents, Žižek contends that the “solipsistic,” speculative and self-propelling epistemological imposition of the global capital violently affects social realities of sub-African populations and countries yet no-one is made responsible for this violence which remains as anonymous as it is terrestrial.

Worse still, the universities in tropical Africa, for instance, were subjected to external curriculum. They were to teach the University of London degree programmes. The setting and marking of examination was regulated by the University of London and the degrees that were awarded were those of University of London (Ibid). The curriculum was, in all respects, a replica of the Western curriculum. This is what Nelson Mandela (n.d) alludes to when he notes in one of his speeches that:

On the first day of school, my teacher, Miss Mdingane, gave each of us an English name and said that from thenceforth that was the name we would answer to in school. This was the custom among Africans in those days and was undoubtedly due to the British bias of our education.

Mawere (2012; 2014) have also noted similar experiences in Mozambique, where even today children entering school have their traditional names changed, with them attributed Portuguese names. All these were [and indeed are] aspects of imperialising education in Africa. To exacerbate matters, the satellite campuses were dependent on British government for funds and other university facilities. This was similar in French and Lusophone colonies where funding and management was allegedly done by France and Portuguese, respectively. In Belgian colonies of Rwanda and Burundi University education followed the Belgian model. In French colonies such as the Democratic Republic of Congo the University of Lubumbashi (1954), University of Lubumbashi (1956) were certified affiliates of some major universities in France (Ibid). In all Franco-phone Africa

all colonial diplomas and certificates were until 1968 issued by the French Ministry of National Education (Ibid). Similarly, in Lusophone Africa university curriculum, examination regulation and awarding degree was issued by the Portuguese ministry of education (Cross, 2001).

Put differently, in many British colonies, the university colleges were not independent as they were regulated by two important institutions in Great Britain namely the inter University Council for guidance, policy, academic appointments and University of London for approval and control of details of degree regulations (cf. Nyanchoga 2014). In Francophone, the French Ministry of National Education was the oversight body that regulated the activities of the universities in her colonies. The idea of colonial university thus paid more attention to needs of the colonial empire than to the needs of local people. The formulation of education in the colonial period contrasted sharply with the cultural background of African societies pointing out that African universities that emerged in the colonial period did not assume an African identity nor did they embrace Africanist approach (Ibid). Colonial higher education was completely de-culturalised and deliberately failed to integrate multi-cultural traditions of African societies. It relegated the traditional African education system to the margins and more so undermined African value systems. Consequently, it produced graduates who were unable to fit into their cultural backgrounds. This is clearly illustrated by Ali Mazrui:

Western education in Africa conditions was a process of psychological de-culturalisation. The educated African became [...] a misfit in his own village [...] when he graduated [...]. His parents did not expect him to continue living with them tending cattle or cultivating the land (Mazrui 1978:16).

It is therefore apparent and undisputable that colonial education in many formerly colonised countries was Euro-American biased and indeed remain so years after the demise of colonial administration as in the case of Africa. This was reflected in the medium of instruction as well as the curriculum. In case of the former, teaching was

conducted in the language of the coloniser. The French for instance, always insisted on French as the language of instruction and the education system followed the French pattern, with oral and/or written final exams administered at the end of the year (Ibid). Admittedly, all courses at the university were taught in French and only those who had acquired a high level of proficiency in French could acquire education. To ensure that they were completely in charge, the curriculum was almost exactly the same as in France (Nyanchoga, 2014). The same applied to the British and Portuguese colonies. In view of this, the early Greek philosophers many years ago put the question differently when they asked: “Is university education a public good or a private good?” And even today, when we engage the debate on institutional autonomy and academic freedom the same question arises: “who benefits or who must benefit between the individual and the public after one has received university education?” (Maimela 2007: 2). There is, therefore, need for decolonising education in Africa.

## **University Education in Post-Colonial Africa**

As noted by de Blij and Muller (2003) the colonial powers superimposed their domains in the African continent and by the time Africa regained its independence after the late 1950s, it could no longer fully regain its indigenous education. As stated by Mkandawire (2005) one task of education in both the enslavement and colonisation of Africa was to dehumanise the enslaved and the colonised by denying their history and denigrating their achievements and capacities. Notably, in the first decades of independence there was demand to democratise the education system to the wide majority of African populace. This led to quantitative transformation of university education due to pressure from African political elites to open up university education to the African population to train Africans and replace Europeans in the civil service (Nyanchoga, 2014). In all these endeavours, two areas lagged behind. These were the Africanisation of the curriculum and the funding of the university institutions. In light of this, the emerging universities were caught in the tangles of Africanisation and yet offering educational courses that



drew heavily from Euro-American models. Even so, the language of instruction ironically was the language of the coloniser/'oppressor'. Thus, the idea of creating an African university from the onset was caught up in these contradictions (Ibid).

Besides, major international institutions such as the World Bank directly influenced the policies of the university in Africa by making several recommendations that affected university education in Africa. The policies apart from their economic value were political. The 1988 World Bank report; *Educational Policies for sub-Saharan Africa: Adjustment, Revitalisation and Expansion* criticised the role of higher education in Africa in national development (World Bank, 2009: xxviii). The Policy paper indicated that higher education in Africa was a luxury. The policy paper further indicated that the social rates of return from investment were higher for basic education than for higher education. To this end, African governments were impressed upon to give more emphasis on basic education if they were to get assistance from the lending institution (Ibid). Interestingly, the immediate effect of this policy was the withdrawal of bilateral support and funds for higher education by the lending institution and other donors. In unison with the policy, individual African countries also withdrew support for their own institutions of higher learning and the Association of African Universities and African government began to implement policies under the guidance of the World Bank (Ibid). Whether the policies produced positive results or not is another matter.

Against this background, Africa remains at the bottom of knowledge production ladder because African scientists depend on funding from the north; pursue methodologies and academic values governed by western regimes. Though the procedures followed in the course of undertaking research, peer review process to authenticate and legitimise research, styles and formats employed are universal; they are perpetuated by forces that are located in the North and tend to serve a different developmental agenda (Nyanchoga, 2014). These instruments that are used to establish institutional hierarchy, status and prestige and quality are crafted in the North. Countries in the North invest billions of dollars in knowledge production. In 2006 and 2007, for instance, USA companies invested 212 billion dollars and

219 billion dollars, respectively, in research (Ibid). India spent 24 billion dollars in research in 2004, China 94 billion dollars in research, while sub-Saharan Africa contributed *only* 1 percent of global knowledge in 1991 and 3 per cent in 1997(Ibid).

It can be noted that independent African countries inherited an education system that was shaped by a different social cultural milieu. Since the process of decolonising education system has been slow universities in Africa are indifferent to the social climate in which they operate in because they are alien to it. Consequently, university education fails to integrate the multi-cultural traditions of the society in which they operate largely because many of them had their roots in the colonial order. They simply manifest lack of a social responsibility to society. This implies the need to decolonise the African university in a way that makes more responsible, reflective and critical to the society it claims to be serving.

### **The politics of knowledge production in Africa**

It is largely undisputable that the modern African societies are submerged in Westernisation or are Eurocentric and Americocentric hence it is extremely difficult for them to reconstruct their pre-colonial identities. Besides, the Global North, through globalisation has achieved a milestone that cannot be easily re-arranged (Mosweunyane, 2013). It is vital to note that the Global North is taking advantage of Africa's underdevelopment to impose its canon of knowledge (Loomba, 1998). In other words, the underdevelopment of Africa will render it susceptible to knowledge fronts determined and produced by the so-called developed countries. From the foregoing it is sad to note that knowledge about development that is validated internationally, preferably through publications in North American or European journals, commands a higher status than work published in the developing regions of the world such as Africa, often regardless of how relevant or closely connected it may be to the developmental problems of those regions (Nyanchoga, 2014). Similarly, higher status is conferred upon work that conforms to the evidentiary and analytical standards of Western economics and social sciences, often regardless of how pertinent the

questions it asks are to the realities of underdevelopment and to available strategies for overcoming it (Ibid).

Equally important to note in the politics of knowledge production, is the manner in which the Global North is controlling and monopolising journals and publishing houses. Besides censoring material to be published, there is an alarming publication disparity between Africa and the Global North. The publication gap has the effect of silencing southern epistemologies and ontological commitments and reinforcing the domination of Euro-American-based epistemologies, ontologies, and critical theories (Graham, 2014; Zeleza, 2014). The geopolitics of knowledge creation—who creates knowledge, from which spaces, with which theoretical perspectives, and for which political ends—remains uneven and unequal across gendered, racialised, linguistic, and geographical lines (Ibid). An analysis of the 9500 journals included in the Web of Knowledge Journal Citation Reports (JCR) database reveals a striking global publication gap: The US and the UK publish more indexed journals than the rest of the world combined and Switzerland publishes more than the entire African continent. At the same time, African people, places, and knowledges constitute the primary data for hundreds of thousands of articles published annually by social scientists (Ibid).

To exacerbate matters, the Global North has a tendency of considering journals and publishing houses from other continents as predatory. Ironically, most of the ‘so-called’ credible journals are from the Global North. Contrarily, most of the ‘so-called predatory journals are from Africa and Asia. A case in point is the 2016 Beall’s List of predatory Open Access Publishers which can be accessed on line. This is perhaps a measure that is meant to thwart competition as well as to ensure that Africa remains an educational brain child of the Global North. Sadly, scholars from African universities instead of critiquing this ill-intentioned move, surprisingly encourage their staff members to publish with journals and publishing houses from the Global North if they want their work to be considered as credible.

Another striking example that brings to the fore the politics involved in the production of knowledge is the offering of scholarships to upcoming and promising African scholars. These

scholarships besides having certain conditions attached to them, for instance, studying at a certain university with a research agenda that augers well with that of the funders, are meant to divert these potentially promising upcoming researchers from pursuing their own research agendas hence confining and orienting them to their rules and norms of research. It is a truism that the Global North is using money and power to control and determine what is to be studied. As that maybe, African universities have massified without resources. Furthermore, much of the growth in student numbers has taken place in traditional fields such as law, humanities and social sciences, rather than in science, engineering and technology (Brunting, *et al*, 2014; Kapur and Crowley 2008). Apart from that, most African governments are not promoting and funding their respective universities to capacitate and equip them with the relevant resources necessary for development. For Castells (2001), the major area of underdevelopment in Africa is in the research or 'generation of new knowledge.' This is the reason why Africa is at the bottom of almost every indicator-based ranking and league table in science and higher education. Castells further notes that structural and institutional problems such as low levels of funding contribute to lack of progress in research. In other words, the academic environment in African universities is not attractive enough for talented national scholars who, as a consequence, move to universities abroad (especially in North America and Europe) which, for Castells, offer more attractive academic environments.

Apart from that, while the continual use of foreign languages such as English, French and Portuguese as medium of instructions from elementary stages to tertiary education may be applauded as a good idea, the underlying reason is that the Global North would want to continue meddling and monitoring the development of education in Africa thus, stifling development and dictating what ought to be studied as well as suppressing any African epistemological theory that would dare threaten their set research agendas. There is need for Africa to either use their mother languages as medium of instruction or "scientificate" their own languages. This is mainly due to the fact that it is extremely difficult for a person to fully express his/her

mental faculties using a foreign language. This however has the negative effect of limiting the elasticity of the African people's mind.

### **Harnessing indigenous practices in the education curriculum**

It is worth mentioning that solutions to socio-economic and developmental challenges that currently plague the African continent must proceed from understanding the role of indigenous knowledge systems play in promoting sustainable development. This can be achieved by integrating indigenous epistemologies into the formal education system to address some of the knowledge deficiencies for community development that is currently formulated from the Euro-American perspective. This approach challenges the dominance of Euro-American knowledge in Africa's education sectors that makes education disembodied from context. Mazrui (1978:13) cited in Mawere (2014) advances a critique of the ideological foundations of African education in which he regards neo-colonial cultural dependency as a threat to African psychological autonomy and sovereignty. He further argues that, "Very few educated Africans are even aware that they are also in cultural bondage. All educated Africans [...] are still cultural captives of the West."

In light of the above, it is important to note that the education sectors in Africa have a prominent role to play in creating sustainable livelihood systems through Indigenous Knowledge development. Thus, there is need to appreciate the role of indigenous epistemologies and practices in the community development processes (Angioni, 2003; Dei, 2002). The strategy requires the adoption of an indigenous approach to education that involves contextualising the school curriculum by integrating indigenous epistemologies with other relevant and useful knowledges into formal education to foster community development. It can be noted that community development policies and strategies that are made in isolation of the community's philosophy of life, imposed and which totally disregard the traditional values of the African people, lack the very foundation that is intended to sustain it (Sifuna and Otiende, 1994). Arguably, universities by virtue of their position in academia and society can create an enabling environment for harnessing

indigenous knowledge systems with community development through supportive research policy, inter-scientific dialogue enhancement, joint learning and capacity building, deliberate stimulation of local and country wide regional economies, dealing with controversies and the traditional resources rights. Precisely, community development in Africa must be premised on African values, belief system and norms that are very building blocks of African life. Therefore, there is need for local solutions, pluralism and community based solutions and reliance on local resources and indigenous epistemology.

Most importantly, education is acknowledged for playing a pivotal role in harnessing the different forms of knowledge bases and creating a social fabric for societies that can engender social, economic, and political sustainability (Owuor, 2007). The current acrimonious debates on indigenous epistemology in the African education context for example, arise from the recognition of the need to address deficiencies of knowledge of development that is formulated in the Global North. With the integration of local knowledge that is more appropriate to the needs of the indigenous communities it is hoped that local problems can be addressed effectively leading to sustainable development. Since the 1970s, a growing number of scholars and United Nations Organisations turned their attention to exploring how indigenous knowledge and institutions could contribute to more culturally appropriate and sustainable development (Dei, 2002; Shiva, 2003; UNESCO, 2006). It has been realised that indigenous people are not only more aware of but also better able to identify their own needs than are outside developers. It is important to note that those needs are defined and refined by the African culture as ways in which the survival of indigenous peoples depends upon significantly (Dei, 2002; Mudimbe, 1988).

The main thrust of the indigenous approaches to education is to enable African countries, such as Zimbabwe, to develop capacities to redefine their own paradigm of development based on diverse contexts of the local communities (Angioni, 2003; Dei, 2002; Mudimbe, 1988; Shiva, 2002). As Busia (1964:17) puts it: “traditional education sought to produce men and women who were not self-

centred, who put the interest of the group above personal interest': men and women who were innovative and represented 'think tanks' of the society. This will eventually pave way for community development. Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1981), Julius Nyerere (1966) and Mawere (2014) corroborate the same line of thought. These scholars argue that a racialised curriculum is a new form of imperialism – a neo-colonial instrument of manipulation – to control knowledge production in the world. The assumption is that by creating awareness of the value and potential contribution of indigenous knowledge and practices to sustainable development, African countries would be able to realise alternative solutions to current pressing issues such as poverty alleviation, climate variability adaptation and the challenges attributed to HIV/AIDS pandemic at grassroots levels. Dei (2002) posits that "we need to call for locally defined models of sustainability which will prevail the realities of local peoples, with all their societal, cultural, political, spiritual, moral, and ecological goals and aspirations".

Moreover, an indigenous approach to education is multi-faceted and multi-dimensional phenomena, which places, among other factors, environmental preservation practices as key to sustainable development. It can therefore be observed that, communities can be able to build their social and cultural capital in order to exercise their sovereignty in their own development processes. The idea is to set up appropriate institutional spaces for communities and educators to provide guidance to socio-economic development through multiple forms of knowledge including indigenous knowledge forms and pedagogies (Owuor 2007). Through this approach it is hoped that communities will be able to self-organise and self-direct skills and knowledge that can support development at the micro level (Dei, 2002; Shiva, 2003; UNESCO, 2006) in order to avert the current economic marginalisation facing African countries such as Zimbabwe. The challenges facing African states such as Zimbabwe is the capacity to define their own paradigm of development if they are to expand their own locus of authority out of the web of dependency on developed nations created by many years of colonial and foreign influence on education and development policies (Shiva, 2003).

## Conclusion

It is very important to conclude by indicating that in the struggle to survive, societies evolve philosophies of life peculiar to their existential circumstances. As such, Africa had its own form of education that made African societies to survive. The colonial forces embarked on an agenda to make African knowledge and skills to be inconsequential and engaged in an undertaking to replace them. Whilst Africa has benefitted and still benefits from the education that is offered by the West and North America, it has to be admitted that Western and North American education is incapable of solving African problems. The chapter has shown that education will continue to be defined by the powerful forces that control Global events and not so much by the African continent. This means that Africa will continue to have less or no influence in the design of the curricula and render it an educational slave of the Global North. It is also of paramount to note that, the emergence of globalisation has strengthened the justification for the use of Global North's concepts in the African education sector. It has to be noted that indigenous knowledge, skills and attitudes were important for the continent of Africa because they were relevant and the continent would have advanced if it was left to develop its education systems. Thus, it is necessary for more research to be done to unearth important knowledge systems that belong to Africa, which can be utilised in the economic, political and social advancement of the continent.

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### **Recognition Politics and Violence in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria**

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#### **Introduction**

Over the centuries, violence seems to have determined and influenced the rise, fall and regeneration of civilisations. World history is replete with violent clashes as these have been experienced in Europe, America, Middle East, Latin America and Africa. The African continent has had its own share of cataclysmic violence from the pre-colonial, colonial to the post-colonial eras. Violent eruptions have continued to wreak havoc in the 21<sup>st</sup> century African dispensation as observed in Rwanda, Burundi, Sudan, Somali, Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, South Africa, Mali and Nigeria. Broadly therefore, the huge question then is: what are the causes, dimensions and effects of various forms of violence in the African political space? Various reasons have been advanced for the causes of violence in Africa such as poverty, ignorance, religion, ethnicity, political intolerance, greed, struggle for the control of human and natural resources, ineptitude political governance, militarisation of the body politic, economic crises, and insecurity, among others.

In Nigeria for example, four major violent flash points can be mapped out within the country's post-independence politically era grouped six geo-political zones of south-south, south-west, south-east, north-west, north-central and north-east. These are the Boko Haram terrorist activities in the north-east, the frequent armed conflict between Fulani herdsmen and farmers in the north-central and militant agitation in the south-south. The Boko Haram and Fulani herdsmen activities are not the focus of this discourse but militant agitation that seems to have sub-sided since the inception of the Mohammadu Buhari's civil regime in May 2015 until the recent resurgence of violent militant activities that began in April 2016.

Collier (2010: 6–7) argues that violence and wars seem to be synonymous with third world nations than first world countries. His reason for that position is that rich nations are relatively peaceful than poor nations. If Collier's thesis is used to interpret the Niger Delta conflict, it could be inferred that the rich nations would have handled the crisis better and perhaps avoid the scope of violence experienced in the Delta region. However, Collier's thesis is susceptible to various interpretations because rich nations also experience conflicts as happened in Greece in 2014. Greece is a rich nation compared to most African countries. The point of my argument is that violence is not exclusive of any region. The violent conflict in the Niger Delta region of the south-south of Nigeria is a classic example of recognition politics as a result of the people's reaction to government neglect. The Niger Delta region comprises seven states of Ondo, Edo, Delta, Rivers, Cross-Rivers, Akwa Ibom and Bayelsa. It has been argued that the discovery of crude oil in commercial quantities in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria since 1956 formed the foundation for the later violence in the region. Crude oil is Nigeria's economic artery as the country derives about 95 percent of its revenue from the sale of the commodity ([globaleedge.msu.edu/countries/Nigeria](http://globaleedge.msu.edu/countries/Nigeria)).

Arguably, as a result of the significant economic role of oil production to the state, almost all the successive governments have done everything within reach to secure control of this natural resource. It should however, be expressively stated that this present chapter argues that neither the presence of crude oil in the region nor damage done to the environment by oil exploration companies coupled with government neglect of the damaged environment and human resource are the sole reasons for the violence in the Niger Delta states. Equally important, perhaps has been the involvement of educated elite. These educated elites, including most especially Ken Saro-Wiwa, and Asari Dokunbo have been able to use their knowledge of impact of environmental degradation to mobilise the people resistance.

The people of the Niger Delta tolerated the squalid situation until the educated and the enlightened got involved in the agitation to draw recognition to the plight of the region. The continued agitation and peaceful protest organized by the elite attracted the concern of the

Nigerian government which responded to the people's demands with violence. The government's action in some circles could be regarded as appropriate because it has been argued that violence is a legitimate weapon of the state to safeguard what the state considers as its "vested strategic interests" (Danfulani, 2010: 9). This position is strengthened by Max Weber who argues that "the state [has] the right to use violence [while] all other individuals or associations may use it only to the degree permitted by the authorities" (cited in Anifowose, 2011: 3).

Granted, the state can use violence on aggressors threatening its territorial integrity. However state violence against its own citizens some of who simply ask for a fair deal from the state is reckless. It amounts to gross abuse of state power when defenceless and unarmed citizens are terrorized with violence. That is the scenario in the Niger Delta region as the state deployed its armour of war against a people that has the courage to demand that government should be accountable. For example, the HAKURI 11 military invasion of Odi in 1999 was justified by the then Minister of Defence General Theophilus Danjuma who contended that "this operation (Hakuri 11) was initiated with the mandate of protecting lives and property, particularly oil platforms, flow stations, operating rig terminals, pipelines, refineries and power installation" (Oshodi, 2004: 21). The continued use of brute violence by the state's militarised organs in the region, equally created chaotic scenes that led, among others, to arms struggle and use of sustained violence between the state's coercive arms and militants in the region.

The militants under the aegis of Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) adopted various legal and illegal means such as the use of the local and international press and also unfortunately, kidnapping of expatriate and innocent Nigerians to draw attention to the plight of the people in the region (The Comment, November, 2000, The Nation, January, 2007). The broad strategy of MEND falls within the domain of recognition politics which is often used by the underdog to beam attention to the demands of individuals or groups. This method effectively beamed international search light to development in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. To this extent, the place of recognition politics in the

international system is vital to the critical and strategic demands of the oppressed and repressed. Englund (2004: 1) aptly captures this when he argues “the demand for recognition comes to the fore in the current politics of nationalism, [and] in the aspirations of minority group”. The Nigerian civil war of 1967-1970 fought by the Igbo of south east Nigeria under the leadership of the then Colonel Odimogwu Ojukwu, who was one of the educated elites from the region, against the Nigerian state was equally to draw recognition to a vexed issue of marginalisation and neglect by the then military government of Nigeria. The present protest among the south eastern states since 2015 should be understood as a continuation of the actualisation of a Biafran Republic due to the persistent believe that the Igbo are marginalised in Nigeria. This believes is against the backdrop that the Igbo region has not produced the national President since 1960. However, the Igbo agitation is not the focus of this chapter.

This chapter agrees with the stated reasons identified for violence in African polity, and argues that these reasons should be considered as manifestations of a deep rooted factor, which is, the neglect of responsibilities by political authorities on the one hand, and demand by the educated elite for recognition of those areas of neglect. The chapter adopts a historical interpretative approach to argue that violence in the African polity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century has become an alternative instrument of drawing recognition to some of the issues majority of Africans consider as fundamental to their daily survival. To achieve the purpose of the discourse, the chapter discusses the theoretical framework followed with the causes, dimensions and various conflict management styles introduced by the various Nigerian governments. It concludes by arguing that violence and conflict can be mitigated or managed by Africans if necessary authorities developed a consultative crisis management approach (CCMA) to quickly identify and proffer solutions to potential pro-violent situations.



## Politics of recognition

It is difficult to specifically proclaim that some definite conditions are capable of provoking violence. This is because individual and group perception and understanding of situations often determines the nature of responses to situations. For example, when we ponder on the American revolution of 1776, we may come to a conclusion that the revolution was provoked by the activities of the enlightened that used the prevailing situations of the time to mobilise people against the existing government. The emphasis here is that those conditions had been there for several years until the likes of George Washington, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin and other educated elites informed the people of the injurious impact of those conditions on them and their society.

Scholars have attempted, using hypothesis to explain some of the conditions that are capable of provoking violence. Some of these theories are frustration-aggression, systemic and group conflict. The frustration-aggression perspective argues that when expectations are not met, it leads to frustration, which in turn generates anger expressed through violence (Gurr, (1968, 1970), Dollard (1939), and Yates (1962). The systemic theory emphasises the appreciation of the socio-economic and political environment of a society in relation to government policies and attitude as the basis of understanding violent reaction as a form of protest (Feldman and Hurn (1966), Korhauser (1959) and O'Connell (1967). While the group theory approach draws attention to the possibility of how deprivation can create struggle for political power among groups in order to control resources for survival.

These theories can explain, to some extent, but however not enough to justify why there is violence in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. Agreed that it is the people's expectations that government would address the infrastructural and environmental challenges of the region as a result of crude oil exploration by at least implement policies to reclaim and sustain the environment (Allen, 2012). Instead, the people's expectations are dashed as successive government regimes neglected the needs of the people. With time

frustration set in, which has been expressed through violent struggle of the peoples for resource control.

It is important to ask, is there any relational link between government neglect/environmental degradation and violence? Allen seems to have answered the question while making a case for government to implement oil related policies that “....there is no direct relationship between violence and failure of the government to effectively implement its national environmental public policies, there is an indirect relationship between the two variables. The failure of the government to effectively implement its national environmental public policies is responsible for the socio-economic conditions that have ensued” (Allen, 2012: 147). Well, it should be stressed that the failure of government to act no doubt contributed to creating the *condition* for violence but *of* not violence itself until educated elites of the Niger Delta extraction began to be actively involved in the agitation for government recognition of the impact of its misrecognition of the challenges in the region.

Recognition politics is more than “the demands for recognition... [in] a public space in which debate can proceed without intimidation” (Englund, 2004:1). Rather, recognition politics is considered in this discourse as the ability and capacity to identify individual or groups expectations within a giving or specific society. This translates to the fact that in a multicultural and ethnic society as Nigeria, every group would have its own unique demands and expectations within the Nigerian political space. For the people of the Niger Delta, the use of violence is to draw government and other stakeholders in the oil industry to first recognise that sovereignty belongs to the people and that the sovereignty of sub-national identities to exist and operate within a national government devoid of intimidation must be recognised.

The lack of recognition has its own consequences as aptly enunciated by Englund (2004:1) as “the lack of recognition, not to mention misrecognition, inflicts harm that threatens the very existence of nations, minorities and other disadvantaged groups”. This is the time the dexterity of political leadership in Nigeria is important. Fukuyama (2012:7) uses the American society as a good example of the role of leadership in national cohesiveness that the

American system is surviving "...because at certain critical junctures in its history when strong government was necessary, it was possible to forge the consensus to bring it about through the exercise of political leadership". Unfortunately, Nigeria seems to have some high level of deficiency in the generation of patriotic national leadership (Ehiabhi and Ehinmore, 2011).

## **Causes of the violence**

The Niger Delta violent conflict that has engulfed the Delta region of Nigeria since the 1990s is believed to have been provoked by several natural and human factors. Oshodin and Oseghale (2005: 72-78) argue that the federal government's land use act that appropriate all natural resources without recourse to the traditional land ownership patterns, unfair practices of revenue allocation, which is considered as unacceptable to oil producing communities, and skewed oil policies that gave oil companies wide latitude with less restraint to operate created a volatile situation. That "in an attempt to seek redress for their perceived feelings of neglect, deprivation and underdevelopment resorted to violent demonstrations which resulted in the loss of many lives and properties as a way of drawing the attention of the Federal government and oil companies to their cause" (Oshodin and Oseghale, 2005: 77).

Moro (2008: 43-44) strongly believes that the presence of oil companies and their activities negatively affected the ecology of the area as water, land and air have been polluted to the extent that they potentially constitute a health time bomb to the people of the Niger Delta. Moreover, as Adekanle (2009: 76-77) posits there are three major structural factors responsible for the violence in the region. For him, "inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic rivalries... over the ownership of oil-bearing land...perceived neglect by the government over the years... [and] environmental depreciation of the oil producing communities." Others argue that one of the fundamental causes of violence in the region was the activities of oil companies. To this degree, Muritala (2010:63) advances the position that violent "agitation across the region [Niger Delta] was a response to the failure of the government to regulate and control the activities of the

multinational oil corporation's thereby encouraging massive exploitation of Niger Delta peoples land and resources". Regarding the environmental factors, Ehinmore (2010: 93) advances in corroboration with Moro postulation that "the leading and immediate factor of these conflicts has been environmental degradation, which is the direct corrosive effect of oil exploration and exploitation".

Some scholars have identified the peculiarity of the geography of the region as harsh and difficult to easily navigate because of its "narrow creeks and mangroves" (Ehinmore and Edo, 2010). The challenging environmental limitations and restraints place a lot of pressure on the people as they strive to survive in such a limiting environment. As a stress-induced environment, the people expected government at all levels and multinational oil companies in the region to provide at least some basic infrastructure to ameliorate their plight. There is also the causative position that government neglect of the region also contributed to provoking the violence in the region. Those who hold this position argue that if government had regulated the activities of oil companies and provided the required infrastructure, perhaps violent tendencies and expression could have been minimized. Thus "the continued negligence, lack of commitment to the plight of the Niger Delta [...] led to the violent confrontations" (Anifowose, 2011: 288–289) coupled with "rampart corruption and insensitivity of the leaders" (Anifowose, 2011: 292).

Osarhiemen (2013:180) also believes that the primary cause of violence in the Delta region of Nigeria was "the continuous neglect of the people and their demands ...". The weight of argument from the academic discourse seems to suggest that the physical neglect of the region by concerned authorities provoked the violent reaction of the people, as violence became a veritable instrument to draw recognition to the situation. For example, the people of Ogoni, in the Niger Delta region hold that their region, produces the biggest chunk of Nigeria's oil rich resources, yet it remains one of the least human and infrastructural developed sections of the country (Gbenenye, 2014: 111).

Among the negative effects of oil exploitation in the Niger Delta region include impacting agriculture, fishing, human and

environmental wellbeing through oil spillage and gas flaring (Gbenenyo, 2014, 113– 117). Over the years, successive governments have deliberately refused to take drastic steps towards addressing the hazards associated with the presence of oil exploration companies (Allen, 2012) whose presence has been with the Niger Delta region for the past 60 years (1956 – 2016). The question that comes to mind is that why did it take the people of the region that long a time to resort to violent agitation? Put differently and as earlier asked by Oshodin and Oseghale, 2005: 62) “why are indigenes of Niger Delta today clamouring for [more] resource control?” (Oshodin and Oseghale, 2005: 62).

Most literature on the Niger Delta violence seems to suggest that among others, the neglect of the region by relevant authorities provoked the violence. For example, Gbenenyo (2014:118) emphasized that “the continuous neglect of the oil producing communities by the government could be taken as one of the reasons why the Ogoni people should be demanding for resource control”. Interestingly scholars have not interrogated the possible reasons for the neglect but often refer to authority’s refusal to address the challenging environmental hazards of the Niger Delta region. However, this discourse infers from a statement made by the late Ken Saro-Wiwa that neglect goes beyond infrastructural provision. Rather for the elites in the region, neglect means among others, the non-inclusion of the elite into the apparatus of governance. Ken Saro Wiwa (cited in Odugu and Ogbari, 2008:102) pointed out that:

Citizens from the oil bearing areas must be represented on the boards of directors of oil companies prospecting for oil in particular areas....Finally, the Delta people must be allowed to join in the lucrative sale of crude oil. Only in this way can the cataclysm that is building up in the Delta be avoided.

From Saro-Wiwa’s comment, it could be inferred that the involvement of the educated elite in the struggle of the Niger Deltans prepared the grounds for a radicalised activist/militant re-orientation of the struggle. The inference is informed by the fact that for about 42 years, the people tolerated the vicissitude of neglect without violence. For example, an eighty-five year old elder in Oloibiri, Chief

Clifford Adu expressed the people's ignorance of the impact of oil exploration in the region. To Chief Clifford Adu:

When [Shell] came and began drilling in 1956, [...]. They paid us one pound in 1956 and 1957. And after that they did not pay anymore,...Then we did not know what oil meant or its significance, all we know then were our farms, tilling and trading, so we accepted (cited in Osodi, 2004:22).

It was when radical and enlightened views propagated by the elite began to take shape (as symbolized by Ken Saro-Wiwa and Asari Dokubo) that the people began to further interrogate some arguments of the consequences of oil rigs in their environment and health as championed by Ken Saro-Wiwa when he avers:

The writer cannot be a mere storyteller; he cannot be a mere teacher; he cannot merely x ray society's weaknesses, its ills, its perils. He or she must be actively involved shaping its present and its future (cited in Adegboyega, 2009:11).

Much of the agitation has been noticed to have been located within the Ijaw axis of the Niger Delta, perhaps that might have influenced the reflective opinion of Gbinije that "The Ijaw nation has been able to move Niger Delta forward through a deft and shrewd combination of brinksmanship, dialogue and circumspection on the one hand and militancy, intimidation and strategic manoeuvring on the other" (The Comment, 2006:17). The agitation manifested in two strategies of expression; dialogue and violence.

## **Strategy of peaceful engagement**

The aggrieved people of the Niger Delta adopted a two-pronged strategy to express their disappointment and frustration on the manner their demands were neglected. Various non-violent platforms were utilised to draw government's attention to the people's plight. The most viable non-violent attempt to call on government to address their situation was that carried out by the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) founded in 1990. MOSOP submitted the now famous Ogoni Bill of Rights to the Nigerian Federal government in 1990, a document that contained the grievances and demands of the Ogoni people. Most

commentaries on the content of the Ogoni Bill of Rights suggest that the Bill mainly called for political autonomy and resource control by the people of Ogoni amounting to secession from the Nigerian state (Oshodin and Oseghale, 2005: 62, Sheriff and Henry, 2010: 232). This would mean that the Ogoni Bill of Rights was a direct affront on the sovereignty of the Nigerian State, which therefore placed its leaders and people on a collision course with the military government of that period.

The Babangida regime ignored the recognition of the Bill, but sustained pressure by MOSOP and its subsequent impact on oil companies and oil production made General Sani Abacha, who took over from General Babangida to frontally attack MOSOP and its leaders. However, contrary to the much held characterization of the content of the Bill, a closer interaction with the Bill does not suggest, in my estimation, to contain elements of secession. Rather, the Bill encapsulates the dreams and desires of the Ogoni people to live a better and happy life in their environment devoid of health threatening situations. The Bill states that the Ogoni people did not benefit from the presence of oil companies in their community. This position was clarified in the Bill that claimed, among others, that the people of Ogoni have:

- i. No representation whatsoever in ALL institutions of the Federal Government of Nigeria;
- ii. No pipe borne water;
- iii. No electricity;
- iv. No job opportunities for the citizens in Federal, State, public sector or private sector companies;
- v. No social or economic project of the Federal Government;
- vi. That the Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria Limited does not employ Ogoni people at a meaningful or any level at all, in defiance of the Federal government's regulations;
- vii. That neglectful environmental pollution laws and substandard inspection techniques of the Federal authorities have led to the complete degradation of the Ogoni environment, turning our homeland into an ecological disaster;

viii. That the Ogoni people wish to manage their own affairs NOW, therefore, while reaffirming our wish to remain a part of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, we make demand upon the Republic as follows;

ix. That the Ogoni people be granted POLITICAL AUTONOMY to participate in the affairs of the Republic as a distinct and separate unit by whatever name called, provided that this Autonomy guarantees the following;

- x. Political control of Ogoni affairs by Ogoni people;
  - xi. The right to the control and use of a fair proportion of OGONI economic resources for Ogoni development;
  - xii. Adequate and direct representation as of right in all Nigerian national institutions;
  - xiii. The use and development of Ogoni languages in all Nigerian territory;
  - xiv. The full development of Ogoni culture;
  - xv. The right to religious freedom; and
  - xvi. The right to protect the OGONI environment and ecology from further degradation
- ([www.bebor.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/ogoni-bill-of-rights](http://www.bebor.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/ogoni-bill-of-rights)).

These are the major content of the Bill that is perhaps (mis-)construed as MOSOP's attempt to seek political autonomy from the Nigerian State. Although, the Bill is opened to various forms of interpretation, it is however suggested that inference from the Bill could be understood from the perspective that the MOSOP called for a more involved process of engaging Ogoni indigenes in the administration of Government– oil companies relations. This would mean that the positive involvement of Ogoni sons and daughters in the management of government policies would make appreciable impact because they are from the community hence the need to directly and indirectly involve them in the administration of the region. However, the continued activities of MOSOP and some of its leaders became intolerable to the General Sani Abacha's led military regime in Nigeria. Ken Saro-Wiwa became the symbol of the Niger Delta agitation and struggle, which invariably placed him on



the danger list of the Abacha regime. With time, the Abacha regime took advantage of an intra communal clash in Ogoni to arrest Ken Saro-Wiwa.

It is important to briefly explain that the violent conflict in the Niger Delta Region expressed itself in three dimensions. They were intra-inter communal clashes; host communities against oil companies, and militant groups against the Nigerian state. Ken Saro-Wiwa became a victim of the intra communal clash in his Ogoni Community as he was accused of being among those that master-minded the killing of some of his kinsmen believed to be sympathetic to the cause of the Federal government and oil companies. He was subsequently found guilty by a special military tribunal and eventually hanged with eight other Ogoni persons on the 10<sup>th</sup> of November, 1995.

That action of the Abacha regime, despite appeal from local and international communities to stay execution, radically transformed the Niger Delta conflicts from the non-violent agitation to violent struggle against oil companies and the Federal government. Of reference is the realisation that Ken Saro-Wiwa's death seemed to have minimised the intra-inter conflicts and united all for a common identity struggle against the other two dimensions the conflict expressed itself. As rightly noted by Ibaba and Co (2012:3):

The repression of the Ogoni struggle and the militarization of the region set the stage for violent mobilization against the Nigerian State and the [transnational oil companies] TOCs. Groups such as the Niger Delta People Volunteer Force (NDVF), Niger Delta Vigilante (NDV), and others began to engage security operatives in armed confrontation.

Youths from the Niger Delta region began to mobilise, re-orientate and to gain community support to continue from where Ken Saro-Wiwa stopped. And having assessed the strategy of Ken Saro-Wiwa and the circumstances of his execution, the youth decided to confront oil companies and the collaborating Nigerian state. The preferred medium of expression was through the vehicle of violence.

## **Era of violent agitation**

There is a common saying among the Edo people of Nigeria African saying that when a goat is pursued to the wall with no escape route, the docile goat would turn back to confront its attackers. That aptly describes the violent choice of action adopted by the Niger Delta people to express their neglect and grievances. By 1998, youths of the region were martially mobilized enough to confront the Abacha regime for its repressive policies against them. Specifically on the 11<sup>th</sup> of December 1998, some Ijaw youths met at Kaiama community of Bayelsa State under the auspices of Ijaw Youth Council (IYC) and publicly declared a desire to drive out all oil companies from their communities. They expressed in the document of declaration that they were the sole proprietors of crude oil in their communities and warned oil companies to evacuate ([www.ijawcenbe.com](http://www.ijawcenbe.com)).

The Federal Military government swiftly responded to that threat posed by the declaration by sending heavily armed military personnel to arrest the youths. In the ensuing confusion and arrest, several Ijaw youths were murdered by the military officers. It should be stated at this point that the Kaiama Declaration and violent response it drew from the Nigerian government marked the beginning of armed and counter-armed struggle in the Niger Delta conflict. The following year, 1999, the Odi community in the same Bayelsa State of Nigeria experienced a real war situation. Reports suggested that about 12 Nigerian police officers were murdered by unknown persons in the Odi community (Oshodi, 2004: 21). The Nigerian government under President Olusegun Obasanjo ordered the military to fish out the perpetrators of the heinous murders. The military's inability to apprehend the culprits compelled the armed military personnel to declare war on the community code named Operation HAKURI 11 (Oshodi, 2004: 21).

The Odi incident also left in its wake, the proliferation of several violent militant groups such as the Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force (NDPVF), Joint Revolutionary Council and others under the umbrella of the Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND). The armed struggle manifested itself in different shapes

and forms as observed in oil bunkering/ oil theft, arms trafficking, militancy, bombing, kidnapping, vandalism and attack on off-shore oil rigs (Okonta, 2006). MEND effectively utilized the press at the local and international levels to draw attention to the plight and demands of the Niger Delta (Okonta, 2006). The Nigerian government on its part evolved various strategies to mitigate the conflicts with the use of counter-violence and administrative technique.

### **Conflict resolution strategy by the Nigerian State**

The Nigerian State, over time adopted two approaches to resolve the conflict in the region. These approaches were military and administrative engagements. Both approaches failed to address or reduce the rise of violence because they were inadequate based on faulty theoretical premise that military intimidation and provision of infrastructural amenities would pacify the people. That carrot and stick method however had its own effects on managing the conflict. It aided the Nigerian government in its limited containment strategy, while at the same time drew attention to the demands of the Niger Delta because each time the military announced its successes it invariably reminded the world of the crisis in the region.

The Military controlled Joint Task Force was assigned the sole responsibility to engage and confront the activities of militants in the region. Through its methods and operations, heavy violence was deployed to contain restless youths in the various communities, for example the experiences of Choba, Odi and Warri communities of Rivers, Bayelsa and Delta States respectively in 1991 demonstrates the ruthlessness of the Nigerian state to deal with any situation that would obstruct the flow of crude oil as members of the communities were harassed, brutalized and even tortured (Akpoghome, 2009: 290– 296).

The JTF spoke person Colonel Rabe Abubakar is quoted to have said “we (JTF) do not recognize MEND. So, we do not have any treason to negotiate with them. If we find any militant camp, we bring it down...because the game is up” (The Nation, 2009:5). The Nigerian state therefore thought that military engagement would stop

the agitation and so misrecognised the potential damage MEND constituted. The Nigerian state should have understood as advised by Ngwaba (2009: A3) that “the Niger Delta crisis cannot be solved by force. The solution is to be found in the constructive involvement of the Niger Delta peoples themselves in the resolution of the mounting and daunting socio-economic problems of the Niger Delta.”

Alongside the use of military force, the Nigerian government also established administrative boards and commissions specifically constituted to address the infrastructural needs of the Niger Delta. These institutions have their own history that is worth explaining. The need for this explanation is to show why this method failed to address the real needs of the people and minimised the chances of conflict resolution. The Boards and Commissions such as the Niger Delta Development Board (NDDB) and Oil Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission (OMPADEC) were designed and established by the government without taking into consideration some of the key personalities in the Niger Delta region. Majority of members of the executive and the legislative arm of the federal government had never visited the region to see the damaged environment before enacting bills generated from academic exercises.

Prior to Nigeria’s independence, the Secretary of the colonial colonies, Mr. Allan Lennox Boyd inaugurated a Commission in 1957 to address the fears of the minorities in Nigeria. The Commission was headed by Henry Willinks who recommended among others that the government should place due attention to the development of the Niger Delta region. The outcome of the Willinks Commission’s report led to the inauguration of the Niger Delta Development Board (NDDB) in 1960. The NDDB was an advisory Board under the Presidency to merely advice government on the infrastructural needs of the people. What was rather astounding was that neither the Board’s operational office was not located in the Niger Delta nor was the Board members resident in the region to experience the challenges of living in the Niger Delta.

It is this observed structural defect in inauguration of Boards and Commissions that has come to plague other similar institutions since

1960. Over five Broads/Commissions/Committees were inaugurated between 1960 and 2009 and their establishment has had no appreciable impact on the physical and human resource growth of the people of the region. For example, the Niger Delta Basin Development Authority (NDBD) was created in the 1980s to complement the efforts of the moribund NDDB and expand the region's water ways for improved marine business. There was a time the Federal Parliament enacted a Revenue Act in 1991 that allocated 1.5% of derivation fund to develop the region (Anifowose, 2011: 292). Furthermore in 1992 a new Commission was established the Oil Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission (OMPADEC). This was followed by the Petroleum Trust Fund (PTF), established in 1995 headed by Muhammadu Buhari (now Nigeria's President) to judiciously disburse funds to develop the Niger Delta especially, and Nigeria as a whole as well as the establishment of the Ministry of Niger Delta (The Nation, September, 2008). By the year 2000, OMPADEC was erased and the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) was born (Anifowose, 2011: 292).

It would be of interest to know why those Boards and Commissions failed to improve the living conditions of the people of the Niger Delta, especially those at the creek and water ways. Anifowose (2011: 292) provides a plausible answer that "...mainly because of government neglect of the area, rampant corruption, and insensitivity of the leaders," which has made it difficult for such Boards to achieve stated mandates. However, the extent of agreement is understood to mean that neglect would relate not only to infrastructure but of course the enlightened elite from the communities with sufficient knowledge to manage the affairs of the people. Corruption can always find its bearing when the vast majority of the people are insensitive to how governance should work, so a few at the leadership ladder would also be insensitive to the plight of the governed. It is this complex contraption of African political reality that makes it difficult to observe a systematic synergy between government and the people.

In spite of the fundamental disappointment and failure of the Boards and Commissions, some level of relative peace was

experienced in the region with the introduction of the Amnesty Programme in 2009. The programme was a non-violent approach introduced by the late President Umaru Yar'adua's regime to engage militancy and promote massive development in the region. The programme seemed to have succeeded as all the violent militant groups embraced it, which addressed some of the issues of agitation, rehabilitation and re-training of ex-militant and youths from the Niger Delta region (Imongan, Omokhoa and Ikelegbe, 2016). That was made possible as a result of astute diplomacy and of course consultation and negotiation between government and the stakeholders in the Niger Delta.

The selling point of the programme was the political will of the government not to persecute those militants that voluntarily submitted themselves and their ammunition in return for training in alternatives sources of livelihoods. The present Nigerian government headed by President Mohammadu Buhari announced that government would phase out the Amnesty Programme and re-direct funds for the programme to other developmental needs in the Niger Delta. The announcement drew various reactions, especially from people from the region and a new militant group emerged called the Niger Delta Avenger (NDA). This group claimed responsibility for the resurgence of violence and attack on oil installations in the region (Venora, 2016:11). The consequence of the cancellation of the Amnesty programme on the Nigerian State and the Niger Delta region is outside the scope of this discourse. Be that as it may, several suggestions have been advanced as panaceas to reducing, if not eliminate the use of violence in seeking for recognition of the impact of crude oil exploration on the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. It is to these that the chapter turns.

### **Consultative Crisis Management Approach (CCMA)**

Crises come in different shapes and forms. The most pragmatic approach to resolving any crisis is to first understand the historical and institutional causes of the crisis. Some scholars have made some useful suggestions on how best to address the violence in the Niger Delta. However, some of these suggestions are too simplistic and do

not pay much attention to the depth of the crisis. For example, Gbenenyo (2014:122) suggests that “using essentially political technique” as a medium of negotiation and also “legal technique” through arbitration and adjudication, the violence in the region would minimize. As brilliant as that suggestion may seem, Gbenenyo did not explain or provide a method required to implement his suggestions.

It would be difficult to contemplate at this point that the people of the region would trust government after their experience of neglect in spite of the history of failed administrative Boards and other institutions. Again, the Nigerian government could easily predict that it would not come out clean from litigation because of its failure to implement various recommendations on how best to resolve the crisis in the region, for example the inertia of the Federal government of Nigeria to implement recommended oil related environmental policies is a reference point (Allen, 2012). Anifowose (2011: 282) also argues that the cause of the Niger Delta crisis is as a result of structural violence, which is understood as when the activities of a state endangers peace and induces violence against its citizens. He cited Galtung to buttress his position that for there to be peace, the state itself must redefine its structural relations. For the sake of analysis and to show the limitations in Galtung’s position in relation to the Niger Delta conflict, Galtung avers that:

If to work for peace is to work against violence, it means to work for the absence ...of structures, where no party is exploiting the other, where no party is dependent on the other, but each possesses sufficient autonomy to carry on alone.... Equity, autonomy and solidarity would be the necessary characteristic of such structures.

A careful perusal of Galtung’s suggestion shows the limitations because the Niger Delta region is not autonomous or share parity in terms of power distribution with the Federal Nigerian state. The Nigerian Land use Decree of 1978 vest all lands within the territory of Nigeria under the control of the government and can be demanded for use by government at any point in time. Also, the Petroleum Act empowers the state to take charge and explore petroleum within any part of Nigerian territory (Oshodin and Osheghale, 2005:74–76). From a realistic perspective, no unit of the

state can override the sovereignty of the state. That is the situation with the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. The Amnesty programme helped a lot in ameliorating the crisis but one of the major structural weaknesses of the programme as observed by Ankio Briggs was that it was not born out of negotiation with the people of the region (The Nation, 2009:13)

Taking all other factors into consideration and in line with Fukuyama's (2012:7) submission "Political decay occurs when political systems fail to adjust to changing circumstances." So it is therefore recommended that a communal approach to crisis management is appropriate in the Niger Delta crisis. This communal approach thrives on consultation within the communal family system before decisions are taken because "the Niger Delta issue is about sustainable livelihood, which can only be achieved through free, prior and informed consent of the people on the strategy they collectively believe is best suited to resolve their challenges" (The Nation, September 14, 2008:15).

Despite the massive erosion of some values due to influence from other civilisations, the African family system is still strong and relevant in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Government should begin to see the region not as a geographical landmass but a place with real people longing for, at least, a minimum standard of living. The Consultative Crisis Management Approach (CCMA) is a model that adopts the African village square method of discussing issues affecting the specific community. This is important because each community in the Niger Delta region is unique with its own peculiar infrastructural, environmental and human challenges. This model would require the identification of genuine leaders in each community for government to negotiate with as that process would enable government to recognise the needs of the people.

The tendency to assume that the Niger Delta region is a monolithic society is also misleading as such assumption often colours government's policy formulation and implementation because "If the source of [perceived] oppression is misrepresentation or lack of recognition, the redress is as likely to affect the identity of those in power as of those seeking recognition" (Englund, 2004: 1). For example, Edo, Ondo, and Imo are part of the states considered



as falling within the Niger Delta zone, but the oil related environmental challenges in these states are not comparable to those in Delta, Rivers and Bayelsa states. That is why the CCMA is highly recommended where communities would identify their pressing challenges and work hand in hand with government to addressing the challenges. The CCMA encourages the elite, which often are the spokespersons of their communities to be involved in project mapping and execution. Moreover, the CCMA is quite different from the Adaptive Management Approach (AMA) earlier suggested by Akpoghome (2009). To Akpoghome, 2009: 298), AMA is built around the concept that there should be a synergy between:

The public and private development Agencies charged with managing the developmental agenda for the Niger Delta need to create extensive interaction for and with the people of the region ... [For] the purpose of which [among others] develop insight into indigenous process of the people's active relationship with their environment and the ecology... with the view to minimize conflict with the traditional patterns of their ecological stewardship and livelihood.

An analysis of the structure of AMA would suggest that it was most likely influenced by the more generally believed thesis that the Niger Delta conflict was provoked mainly by environmental considerations. It has been clearly stated in the course of the chapter that the active involvement of the elite in the Niger Delta agitation for government recognition of the damaged environment and neglect of the potentials of the elite group greatly determined the course of the conflict from the late 1990s. Therefore, the violence in the Niger Delta should be understood and interpreted beyond mere agitation against environmental degradation as a result of oil exploration in the region.

The CCMA would allow the people, in the process of consultation to express their frustration, disappointment, anger and expectations. Information from this nature of interaction would be processed to arrive at an aggregate expectation that would satisfy majority of the masses and elite in the region. Furthermore, the various communities would embrace the CCMA if they consider it as representing their thoughts, feelings and expectations.

## Conclusion

A careful perusal of most of the literature on the Niger Delta conflicts and violence seems to convey the impression that most of the discussion ends up as advocacy for the plight of the Niger Delta. Various factors have been identified as possible causes of the violence in the crude oil rich region summarized as neglect of the region. While this discourse agrees with the identified reasons for the violence, the argument is further extended to positing that emphasis has not been placed on the elites dimension in the conflict. This is not to suggest that the elite provoked the conflict but to present that the heated agitation of the people of the region, especially in the creek, is the direct outcome of the involvement of educated and exposed indigenes of the region who understood the several consequences of environmental pollution on the socio-economic and health wellbeing on the environment and people.

The chapter has further noted that neglect encourages sympathy from a wider spectrum of opinions but attention to volatile probability reduces tension, creates more understanding and thereby makes violence less attractive. Investment in human security, which includes provision of social amenities, cannot ultimately stop human demands or violent agitation. This is argued against the natural backdrop that human needs are insatiable and the use of subtle or active aggression is a natural phenomenon in human community.

To curtail violence in the Niger Delta requires purposeful political will of prompt attention to the people needs by designated authorities. Such action would normally attract understanding and understanding creates the atmosphere for virile consultation with the real stakeholders and not government bureaucratic officers who have no experience of the daily challenges of survival in less disadvantaged environment or the use of brute military force. It is this understanding that forms the bed rock of CCMA.

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### **Envisaged Trends in Post-2016 African Development Agenda and their Impact on World Economic System**

*Takavafira Masarira Zhou*

#### **Introduction**

This chapter focuses on politics, development and socio-economic trajectories in Africa in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It unravels the intricacies and complexities of Africa's changing political, commercial and social landscape in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and its impact on the world economic system. Much as Africa has challenges such as conflict, poverty, disease and corruption care must be taken to note the widening of democratic space; incredible strides in gender and women empowerment; considerable progress in many benchmarks of human development; impressive economic growth in some countries such as Nigeria, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique and Tanzania; urbanisation and the emerging middle class – all of which are indicators of the fact that Africa stands on the brink of the Rostow (1963) 'take-off' comparable to that of China. The envisaged transformation must be fully comprehended within the spirit of Pan-Africanism, and the 2013 continental Action Plan - Agenda 2063, which seeks to galvanize and bond in action all Africans and the Diaspora around the common vision of a peaceful, integrated and prosperous Africa, driven by its citizens and taking its rightful place in the world. It is hoped that this inclusive framework would provide internal coherence and coordination to continental, regional and national frameworks and plans adopted by the Organisation of African Union (OAU) and African Union (AU), member states and Regional Economic Communities. Beyond 2016, investments in agriculture (green revolution), gender equity, constant supply of fresh water (blue revolution), infrastructural development (including power), African demographic dividend, peace and stability, and formalisation of informal sector could narrow the indefensible gaps

between the rich and poor, urban and rural, and men and women. Accelerated depth and pace of regional integration, would promote Africa's industrialisation goal while her lucrative natural resources can be tapped and harnessed for a win-win situation with the developed countries. With a new paradigm shift from mere exportation of raw materials to value addition and beneficiation, Africa is set on a path of reawakening characterised by enhanced manufacturing capacity, corporate social responsibility, peace, security and sustainable development. A sound economic development is therefore ushering in Africa based on a complex model of self-initiative, co-operation in trade, investment, finance and technology. In such a scenario of a rising Africa, China's principle of sovereign and business equality will be more appropriate than the American or European conditional bi-lateral trade and investment.

### **Conceptions of Development and underdevelopment**

Theories to historical development have generated controversy in the past and by no means has the controversy been resolved in the present. The pre-1950s modernisation theory (Rostowian theory) postulated that the task of helping the underdeveloped areas out of poverty was to accelerate them along the supposed common path of development by means such as investment, technology transfer, and closer integration into the world market (Smith, 1976). From the 1950s modernisation theory came under a barrage of attacks from proponents of dependency theory such as Baran (1973), Frank (2005), Amin (1976), Myrdal (1970), Furtado (2005), Rodney (1972), Cardoso and Faletto (1979). Dependency theorists strongly argued that the less developed countries should be fully comprehended as the periphery of the developed countries (the centre). As such, development and underdevelopment were viewed as two sides of the same coin.

By the 1970s, a chorus of voices, particularly from free market economists such as Peter Bauer and Martin Wolf dissented against dependence theory. They criticised dependency theorists on the basis that the countries on the periphery of development were not destined



to stagnation. Australia, New Zealand and Canada were all colonies built on exporting agricultural products back to the industrial core, but by 1950s all were firmly established as part of the developed world. Even in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, two of the world's three 'most developed' countries (Norway and Australia) export 70 to 80 percent primary products (UN, *World Development Report 2007/2008*). A bigger challenge for the *dependentistas* is summed up by Frank (1972: 329)'s own statement that: "if the policy is ineffective, it renders suspect the theory from which it is derived." As such, with the economic growth of India and East Asian economies, dependency theory has lost its validity. Yet battered as the theory may appear, it remains relevant in postulating part of the reasons for the underdevelopment of the less developed countries in general and African countries in particular. It is, however, safe to argue that Frank, Baran and Rodney, among others, exaggerated the truth on the impact of the centre to the periphery, and understated the internal inherent contradictions in less developed countries that have also militated against progress.

Ayittey (1999: 30) defines development as an improvement in living conditions for the average person. This entails not only increased income but also better access to education, health, and nutrition. Underdevelopment is an anti-thesis of development and is punctuated by poverty, adverse living conditions, limited access to education, deplorable health and nutrition. Development is measured in terms of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or Gross National Product (GNP). Both try to measure the market value of all goods and services produced for final sale in an economy. The difference is how each term interprets what constitutes the economy. Whereas GDP refers to and measures the domestic levels of production, GNP measures the levels of production of any person or corporation of a country. To determine the average person's income, economists consider the GNP – the total value of all goods and services produced in a country in any given year – and divide this by the population. Therefore, economic growth that exceeds the rate of population growth is a sufficient condition for an improvement in living conditions. Although GDP is the more commonly utilised method of measuring a country's economic success in the world, GNP is also a useful indicator of development. It is important to

reference both when trying to get an accurate depiction of a given country's level of development. It is, however, important to note that the concepts of development and underdevelopment are more determined by western countries than third world countries. This chapter examines Africa's envisaged nature of development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and its impact on world economic system from a multiple theoretical lenses analysis coloured by sustainable development theory and corporate social responsibility discourse. This entails a process of change in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development and institutional change are made consistent with future as well as present needs. In this inclusive development, economic growth is tailor-made to improve the quality of life of the general populace in a country, as well as to enhance environmental protection.

### **The nature of African economic growth and development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

Much as the 19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed extension of European rule to Africa, the late 1950s and 1960s witnessed what Kissinger referred to as 'winds of change' (Walton, Jr., Rosser, Sr. And Stevenson, 2010: 102) as many African states gained their independence. With the independence of South Sudan in 2011, the African continent boasts of 55 sovereign countries. The only exception, the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic, is still under Morocco's colonial rule. African independence did not necessarily guarantee peace, co-operation, economic growth and development as African states became mirrored in myriad of challenges such as civil wars emanating from the artificial state divisions; inventions of tribalism during colonial period; poverty, hunger and starvation; and East-West conflict, among others. Even the neo-liberal policies of the 1990s failed to revamp African economies, let alone improve their livelihoods. A new thaw in African economic growth and development ensued from the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The period 2002 to 2008 witnessed continental growth at an annual average rate of 5.6%. Another eleven African countries (such as Sierra Leone, Nigeria,

Ethiopia, Ghana, Rwanda, Mozambique) grew at an annual rate of 7% or more between 2000 and 2009, which by then was considered sufficient to double their economies in ten years. In spite of the global crisis of 2008, Africa's average growth of 6% during the past decade made it one of the fastest growing regions of the world after East Asia (Cheru 2008; IMF 2013; AfDB, OECD, UNDP, ECA, 2014). High commodity prices, increased domestic demand and consumption, enhanced macro-economic management and governance, a rising middle class and urbanisation, amplified global links, favourable weather conditions and reduced political conflicts and civil unrests, collectively fostered the economic growth.

Six of the world's ten fastest growing economies between 2000 and 2011 were in Africa. Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Ghana and Ethiopia were part of the states that achieved such phenomenal growth. Over one-third of the African countries posted a growth rate of over 6% in the period 2012-2013. Africa weathered the global financial crisis better than any other region and recovered robustly. According to Natama (2013), despite the sovereign debt crisis in Europe and the subdued growth in North America and China, Africa's medium-term growth prospects, projected at 4.8% in 2013 and 5.1% in 2014, were strong. With an average annual growth of over 7% for the past decade, surging foreign investment and exports booming, Ghana has emerged as a poster child for the 'Africa rising' theme. *Africa Progress Report* (2014: 26-31) reflects that average incomes of Mozambique, Rwanda and Sierra Leone would double in less than 17 years if they could sustain the growth record of the past decade. Ethiopia would achieve the same feat in just 12 to 13 years. As such, many African countries are steadily positioned in the upper echelons of the world Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth league. By and large, if the average growth for the period 2000-2015 continues, average income in Africa will undoubtedly double in the next 22 years. This compares favourably with the period 1980-2000, when average incomes contracted by more than 20%.

Admittedly, growth is pushing many African countries towards middle-income status. Whereas in 2006, 13 countries (Angola, Botswana, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Lesotho, Maritius, Namibia, Seychelles, South

Africa, and Swaziland) in the Sub-Saharan Africa were categorised as middle-income - *viz*, with per capita Gross National Income (GNI) between US\$906 and US\$ 11.115, as calculated by the World Bank Atlas method, by 1913 the figure had increased to 21 (Chen 2009; World Bank 2013). World Bank postulates that 10 other countries could attain middle-income status by 2025 if current patterns of growth continue. Natama (2013: 8) argues that the business climate on the continent has greatly improved and there is a fast rising African entrepreneurial and middle class which stands at more than 355 million people or 34% of the total population, thereby increasing the continent's consumer base and providing an impetus for investment by foreign investors such as those from BRICS nations, that is, Brazil, Russia, India and China, as well as from Mexico, Turkey, and South East Asian Tigers.

Much as most African countries were strapped with unsustainable external debt at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, this fell significantly from 53.6% of GNI in 2000 to 20.6% in 2011 (Natama 2013: 8). This was, *inter-alia*, because of the adoption of discreet macro-economic strategies, including tighter fiscal policies and amplified emphasis on domestic resource mobilisation. Equally important, as propounded by Natama (2013), has been the extensive international agreements on external debt forgiveness, including the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative ( MDRI) to cancel outstanding debts of Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC), as per agreement at the 2005 Gleneagles Summit, and the Paris Club's Evian Approach for non-HIPC countries. Notwithstanding this, increased borrowing to fund development and infrastructure projects continues to present a challenge to Africa's debt performance in the medium- and long-term. In spite of this, it is a fact that, at this historical juncture, many African countries have better indicators than countries in the European Union.

**Table 1: Africa's  
20 fastest –growing economies (average growth 2008 – 2013)**

| African countries     | Countries from other continents | Average growth rate |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| Sierra Leone          |                                 | 9.45                |
|                       | <b>China</b>                    | <b>9.07</b>         |
| Rwanda                |                                 | 8.4                 |
| Ethiopia              |                                 | 8.37                |
| Ghana 8.11            |                                 | 8.11                |
| Mozambique            |                                 | 7.25                |
| Nigeria               |                                 | 6.96                |
| Zambia                |                                 | 6.95                |
| Liberia               |                                 | 6.88                |
| Tanzania              |                                 | 6.8                 |
|                       | <b>India</b>                    | <b>6.64</b>         |
| Niger                 |                                 | 6.47                |
| DRC                   |                                 | 6.41                |
| Angola                |                                 | 6.36                |
| Burkina Faso          |                                 | 5.98                |
| Malawi                |                                 | 5.94                |
| Republic of Congo     |                                 | 5.91                |
| Uganda                |                                 | 5.74                |
| São Tomé and Príncipe |                                 | 5.18                |
| Lesotho               |                                 | 4.91                |
| The Gambia            |                                 | 4.54                |
| Chad                  |                                 | 4.51                |
|                       | <b>Brazil</b>                   | <b>3.17</b>         |

**Source:** *Africa Progress Report 2014*, 27.

Foreign direct investments (FDI) inflows to Africa have increased steadily from US\$9.6 billion in 2000 to a pre-crisis high of US\$58.9 billion in 2008, and ricocheted to US\$50 billion in 2012. Investment flows have been driven by high returns across all sectors in Africa, mainly with respect to commodities and construction sector, as well as the discernible improvements in the simplicity of

doing business and the worldwide perception of Africa as investment destination. The emerging BRICS markets do not only now account for one third of Africa's exports but also represent a significant and growing source of FDI (*Africa Progress Report, 2014*: 30) and therefore complementing, if not surpassing, flows from traditional European and North American sources. These have, therefore, diversified sources of investment and are powerful propellants in mitigating future FDI decreases due to economic crisis.

It is clear from the table that the narratives of macro-economic mismanagement and economic stagnation are no longer tenable. Africa now hosts some of the world's fastest growing economies. As reflected on the table, when it comes to growth, Ethiopia rivals China, and Zambia outpaces India. There is more to the growth record than the reductionist and simplistic conceptions of oil and minerals - and more than exports and foreign investment. As the *Africa Progress Report* (2014: 27) postulates: "...the growth surge has extended far beyond resource-rich countries. It spans coastal economies such as Mozambique, Senegal and Tanzania; landlocked Burkina Faso and Uganda; commodity exporters such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria and Zambia; and middle-income countries such as Botswana." The report further points that in Ethiopia and Rwanda, two of the most outstanding economic success stories, growth has been fostered by agriculture while service sectors have figured prominently in the growth records of Burkina Faso, Tanzania and Uganda. By and large, African business groups have emerged as a powerful propellant for change in their own right in areas such as banking, agro-processing, telecommunications and construction.

The *Economic Report on Africa* (UNECA, 2016:xi) shows that global economic growth slowed in 2015 due to a range of challenges in the Euro area, China, Brazil, and the Russian Federation, combined with low oil prices. This slowdown among Africa's trading partners, inevitably affected economic performance on the continent, with growth moderating from 3.9% in 2014 to 3.7% in 2015. Africa's reliance on exports of raw materials to other regions of the world has led to falling revenues for government and a decline in investment. Yet sound as the global and subsequent continental effects may

appear, it is noteworthy that East Africa maintained the highest growth rate in Africa's five sub-regions, at 6.2% in 2015, despite a decline from 7.0% in 2014 (*Economic Report on Africa*, 2016: 10). East Africa's growth is mainly due to increased consumption, stronger investment in natural gas and infrastructure and improved performance in agriculture and services. Growth in West Africa slowed to 4.4 in 2015, from 5.7% in 2014, mainly because of weaker oil prices, the war against Boko Haram in Nigeria and Ebola outbreaks' consequences in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. West Africa continues to attract investment in oil and mining – key sources of growth for Burkina Faso, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria and Sierra Leone- and therefore has potential for robust growth in the post-Boko Haram and post-Ebola period. Southern Africa's growth increased marginally from 2.4% in 2014 to 2.5% in 2015, largely because of poor growth in the sub-region's largest economy, South Africa and increased dependence on extractive industries that were affected by the global slump. Growth in North Africa (excluding Libya) accelerated from 2.8% in 2014 to 3.6% because of improved political and economic stability in the region. Central Africa's overall growth slipped from 3.5% in 2014 to 3.4% in 2015 (*Economic Report on Africa* 2016: 10-11), mainly because of security concerns in the Central Africa Republic and lower oil production in Equatorial Guinea. It is, however, important to note that, all five sub-regions of Africa have potential for robust growth, in an environment punctuated by peace and stability as well as economic transformation.

What has been the impact of the witnessed economic growth of the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century on the well-being of African people? Admittedly, Africa has turned the corner and made some important progress in the past decade. Poverty has fallen from 55% in 2002 to 48% in 2010. Maternal mortality is going down. United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) report on *Levels and Trends in Child Mortality* (2013: 11) shows that for the years 2005-2012, the average annual rate decline of child deaths reached 4.1%, up from 0.8% in the period 1990-1995. Improvement in education is reflected by more children getting into schools and progressing through grades, and narrowing of gender gaps in higher education. Enrolment rates have increased from 59% to 78% for primary school. It is

important to note that sound as these achievements may appear; they have not gone far enough to resolve growing inequality, poverty and starvation inherent in Africa. That African countries spent US\$35 billion on food imports in 2011 is an indicator of defective growth over the past years. It is for this reason that the 2014 *Africa Progress Report* clamours for comprehensive Green and Blue revolutions in Africa as fundamental pillars of sustainable growth and development. As propounded by Kofi Annan:

Africa may be showing impressive headline growth, but too many of our people remain stuck in poverty...if we want to accelerate Africa's transformation, then we have to significantly boost our agriculture and fisheries, which together provide livelihoods for roughly two-thirds of all Africans. If we want to extend the recent economic success of the continent to vast majority of its inhabitants, then we must end the neglect of our farming and fishing communities. The time has come to unleash Africa's green and blue revolutions (cited in *Africa Progress Report 2014*: 11).

As such, beyond 2016 Africa needs not just growth but also economic transformation, with agriculture playing a central role.

## **Green Revolution**

An agricultural revolution is taking shape in many African countries which is envisaged to greatly boost food supply in the post-2016 period. In 2009 Nigeria embarked on an Agricultural Transformation Agenda in order to boost food production by 20 million tonnes, create 3.5 million jobs in agriculture and food-related industries, and make the country self-sufficient in rice by end of 2015. The Agricultural Transformation Agenda has been extended beyond 2015. *Africa Progress Report* (2014: 66) reflects that annual rice production rose from 2.2 million tonnes in 2009 to 3.1million tonnes in 2014, with the private sector responding by developing 14 new rice mills. Cereal production is undergoing transformation as Nigeria has cut imports of wheat flour, replacing it with high-quality home-grown



cassava flour as the main ingredient in bread. Indeed, agriculture is becoming 'the new oil' in Nigeria. UNDP Country Economic Brief (2014) shows that Ethiopia's growth has remained robust and broad based, with agriculture growing by 7.1% in 2012/13 agricultural season, recovering from 4.9% growth in the previous year mainly because of favourable weather and good rainfall, strengthened agricultural extension services, better access to agricultural inputs, improved access to market and pursuit of enhanced policy and advocacy. It is, however, important to note that on a large scale, agriculture in Africa is staging a fragile recovery from several decades of neglect and misplaced policy advice.

Africa's agriculture sector has been critical in generating the growth that has thus far been experienced on the continent. The Green Economy and Trade Report (2013: 45-82), and the *Africa Progress Report* (2014: 54-83) posit that as more than two thirds of Africans (mostly women) depend on agriculture for their livelihoods, boosting this sector is an effective strategy to reduce poverty and inequality. An effective utilisation of Africa's 60% of the world's cultivable land would not only supply the continental deficit but also the world demand of sufficient and quality food. The continent is also implementing the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) whose aim is to improve agricultural production on the continent. Africa is, therefore, at a critical juncture of inaugurating a truly turning point for agriculture punctuated by broad action on policy, investment and technological fronts to help farmers realise their entrepreneurial potential. Such a breakthrough is only feasible when African governments fulfil their commitment under the 2003 Maputo Declaration to allocate at least 10% of national budgetary resources to agriculture and rural development, with the private sector and global community complimenting governments' efforts by investing in Africa's unique green revolution. Once this mixed grill is operational, African countries can end hunger and malnutrition and become major players in global food market in the post-2016 period.

## Blue Revolution

It is a fact that the quality, quantity and availability of fresh water impacts on the continent's social and ecological well-being. In spite of huge water resources in form of large rivers and lakes, *viz.* Congo, Nile, Zambezi and Niger rivers, and Lake Victoria and Tanganyika, Africa is the second driest continent after Australia. Africa's rapid growing economy, urbanisation and expanding population, as well as uneven distribution of water resources, makes water scarcity a key constraint for development. Yet, with careful planning and investment, the water scarcity can be resolved with consequent promotion of food production, ecosystem maintenance, access to water for drinking and domestic use, and development.

Equally important to African population is ground water. More than 75% of the population uses ground water as its main source of domestic consumption. Currently, Africa's water sector faces a myriad of challenges, mainly, multiplicity of trans-boundary water basins; high spatial and temporal variability of rainfall; growing water scarcity; inadequate data and human capacity; and depletion of water resources through human action (Natama 2013: 16). Consequently, the AU in collaboration with United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and African Development Bank (AfDB), has inaugurated 'Africa Water Vision 2025' which aims at creating an Africa where there is an equitable and sustainable use and management of water resources for poverty eradication, socio-economic development, regional co-operation and the environment.

Africa's total length across the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, the Mediterranean and Red Sea, including its Islands, exceeds 26,000 nautical miles. More than 38 African countries are either coastal or island states. However, African-owned ships account for 1.2% of world shipping by number and roughly 0.9% by gross tonnage. African ports handle only 6% of worldwide water borne cargo traffic and roughly 3% of the worldwide container traffic (Natama 2013: 16-17; *Africa Progress Report 2014*: 86). It is a historical fact that Africa's coastal zone is known for its rich biodiversity including fisheries, grass beds and wetlands, which are essential vital sources of livelihoods to many Africans. If properly tapped and harnessed, it

will provide food security, generate valuable sources of export earnings, e.g. tourism, and support vital ecological systems. Substantial oil reserves and gas have also been discovered offshore, while the coastal sand dunes and seabed sediments along the Atlantic shores hold commercially valuable diamonds. Yet sound as this may appear, Natama (2014: 17) argues that Africa's inland waters, oceans and seas are facing serious threat emanating from dumping of toxic waste; illegal trafficking; oil spill; degradation of marine environment; loss of biodiversity; illegal, unreported, unregulated and indiscriminate fishing; and exacerbated effects of climate change. Consequently, the AU Commission has developed the 2050 Maritime Strategy aimed at arresting challenges facing the blue revolution and nurturing more wealth creation from Africa's oceans, seas and inland water ways.

### **Industrialisation, regional and continental integration**

One major envisaged trend in post-2016 African development agenda is industrialisation fostered, *inter-alia*, by agricultural development, regional and continental integration, and peace and stability. The *Economic Report on Africa* (2014) postulates that industrialisation is an essential pre-condition for inclusive growth and structural transformation. In April 2015, Southern African Development Community (SADC) Heads of State and Government meeting in Harare adopted Southern Africa's Industrialisation Strategy geared towards transforming the region into value-addition and beneficiation hub. The *Economic Report on Africa* (2016) calls for greening industrialisation which provides the impetus for turning current supply chains linking natural resources to markets, into value chains that diversify Africa's economies and ensure greater value addition. An analytical taxonomy which moves away from perceiving Africa as a monolithic but a complex mosaic consisting of large middle income countries, frontier markets, fragile small island states, landlocked ones and states rich in natural resources, among others, should be employed in order to foster broad based industrialisation in Africa. Africa should be wary of importing a straight-jacket based on what has worked in different conditions or one-size-fits-all

blueprints. Only new dynamic industrial policy frameworks tailored to the individual conditions of each economy will deliver the desired results.

Admittedly, the technologies, skills and economic linkages needed to drive sustained growth typically come from a rising manufacturing sector. As the chair of the African Union Commission (AUC), Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma puts it: “We believe we cannot achieve development unless we industrialise. We are looking at agriculture as one of the important drivers for industrialisation. We need to process more of our products in order to create jobs for the young” (*Africa Progress Report 2014*: 34). Not surprising as part of its 2014-2017 strategic plans, the AUC has prioritised agricultural production, developing the agro-processing and business sectors, increasing markets access, and guaranteeing food security and nutrition, alongside promoting inclusive economic development and industrialisation (AU 2013). Similarly, the president of the African Development Bank, Kaberuka (2013), affirmed that: ‘We could be the next manufacturing hub but there are some investments to be made. We need to increase our efforts on aviation, deregulation, open the borders and let people circulate so that when business people come they have the market in front of them.’ The Harvard economist, Roderick (2012), contends that skipping industrial development may not be credible option for transformative growth in Africa. At any rate, the technologies, skills and economic linkages needed to drive sustained growth distinctively come from an expanding manufacturing sector. As such, much as Africa has made a strong start to the 21<sup>st</sup> century, there is need to deliver sustained success for the continent, its citizens and enable it to play its full role in the global economy. This calls for African countries and development partners to focus their attention and efforts on establishing industrial policy frameworks needed to deliver sustained and inclusive growth.

For Africa to sustain and even exceed its current optimistic economic growth, a key priority is to hasten the depth and pace of regional incorporation in order to facilitate greater levels of trade, boost diversification and sustainable growth, create large markets, pool human capital and natural resources, and leverage the different

comparative advantages of African countries for the achievement of the continent's industrialisation goal. Both the OAU Charter (1963) and the Constitutive Act establishing the AU (2002) are explicit on regional integration as the fundamental basis for Africa's unity, peace, security and development. Similarly, the Lagos Plan of Action (1980-2000) and the Abuja Treaty (1991) delineate the specific political, economic and institutional frameworks for attaining continental integration and development. Consequently, AU has over the past decade, supported the creation of Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in order to consolidate markets, take advantage of economies of scale, and ultimately to promote sustainable development. The Southern African Development Community (SADC); the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA); the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS); the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CENSAD); the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS); the East African Community (EAC); the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU); and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) constitute the eight regional economic communities in Africa.

The RECs aim at expanding trade among its members through elimination of tariffs, promotion of free movement of people, goods, services and capital; and creation of a customs union, a common market and a monetary union under the auspices of the Minimum Integration Programme. Admittedly, these are smart and economically robust decisions that ultimately could reduce the thickness of borders and remove customs-related red tape, ease access to markets and enhance trade flows including agricultural commodity trade and time susceptible products such as horticulture and other highly perishable goods. As the Director General of World Trade Organisations, Lamy (2013: 2), remarked, "...trimming border procedures could lead to more than 5% increase in GDP in many African countries." It is important to note that intra-African trade in agriculture and manufacturing has reached twice the level of overall trade, thereby creating a solid basis upon which intra-African trade can be expanded and deepened through the development of regional value chains. Regional integration will not only improve intra-African trade but also decrease chances of malpractices such as corruption,

currently fuelled by cumbersome border procedures. Africa is making headway in its integration agenda. The African decision on boosting intra-African trade and moving forward on the Continental Free Trade Area by 2017 and operational African Economic Community (above regional economic communities) by 2020 are testaments to the political attention being given to trade as the real engine of growth in the continent. Beyond 2016 African governments need to step up efforts to bring down the current high trading costs, and make great efforts to formalise informal traders, especially women.

All in all, measures to boost intra-African trade are a powerful lever to help the continent industrialise including boosting increased and diversified domestic and foreign investment. Intra-African trade can also help through the creation of growth poles in different sub-regions and encourage the production of strategic commodities, such as pharmaceuticals. Thus, through regional and global value chains, African countries are expected to broaden avenues for increasing the scope and depth of their involvement in international production and distribution links. Nevertheless, effective participation in these regional and global value chains requires investment in human capital (skills), transparent regulatory and business environments and effective hard and soft infrastructure including a steady source of reliable energy generation, transportation systems and information and communication technologies (ICT).

## **Infrastructure**

The turn of the millennium and the strong economic performance has put infrastructure everywhere in Africa under pressure. It is important to note that an infrastructural revolution is necessary if African states are to effectively move to the next level of transformation in the post-2016 period. When colonial powers were taking over Africa, they put considerable resources into building infrastructure to service the colonial enclave economies. According to Tidy and Lemming (1987: 156-57), in East Africa the colonialists constructed the Uganda Railway line, better known as the 'Lunatic Express' - 1700 km line from Mombasa to Kisumu at the coast of £5.5 million in the period 1895-1901, which would be £9.4 million

today. The period 1880-1914 was the great age of railway building in West Africa. Colonial transport network was tailor made to siphon raw materials from the periphery (colony) to the metropolis (coloniser) and this ensured that it was impossible to develop an integrated transport system for Africa. As propounded by Walter Rodney (1972: 252), "The most outstanding characteristic of the transportation system of Africa is the comparative isolation in which they have developed within the confines of individual countries and territories. This is reflected in the lack of links between countries and territories within the same geographical sub-region." The colonial legacy is still felt in the 21st century, with production and export of commodities geared towards the needs of the former colonial powers - not value addition. In order to enhance integrated infrastructure and balance between export and intra-state trade, the AU has established a flagship programme, the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA). Africa needs around US\$120 billion yearly over the next few years to address the continent's infrastructural needs and keep pace with economic growth.

Admittedly, Africa's largest infrastructural challenge is power. According to Natama (2013:11) more than 30 countries face regular power outages and many are paying high premiums for emergency power. However, it is important to note that the continent has one third of the Global energy potential. The envisioned Grand Inga Dam construction on the Congo River at Inga Falls in the Democratic Republic of Congo, to which the World Bank, the African Development Bank, the European Investment Bank, bilateral donors and Southern African power companies have expressed interest in funding at the cost of \$80 billion, would generate 42,000 MW of electricity and significantly boost the energy available to the African continent (Showers, 2011). Connecting Inga to a continent-wide electricity grid for main population centres would cost \$10 billion more, and would be the world's largest hydroelectric power project. Consequently, the challenge of power can be tackled. Africa has made progress in ICT, though of course it still has some challenges. Basically, the continent is faced with inadequate broadband network development, weak inter-state broadband connectivity and Internet Networks and the absence of Internet

Exchange Point. By and large, access to several types of digital content is a pre-requisite for building an African information society. Whereas other geographical zones average 40%, Africa's telecommunications penetration rate stands at 3%. Investment opportunities that could be exploited by China and other emerging countries are extensive, more so considering Natama (2013:12)'s observation that Africa's needs in the ICT sector exceed US\$9 billion. Explicit areas of investment include, *inter-alia*, development of inter-continental connectivity, upgrading national ICT infrastructure; establishment of specialised broadband networks, Internet Exchange Point Network, and data centres; building Integrated Fibre Optics in all road and energy transmission projects, as well as fibre optic access to at least two different submarine cables.

A steady source of reliable energy generation is imperative for the growth and development of Africa in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The interconnection of regional power pools into continental network, integrated development of major hydropower potential, growth of Trans-Saharan Gas Pipeline as well as the operationalisation of Regional Gas Pipelines and petroleum products pipelines; and the establishment of an African Electrification fund are high on the needs of Africa in the post-2016 era. Gigantic prospective also exists for the development of renewable and clean energy such as geothermal, wind and solar energy. Natama (2013: 12-13) argues that efforts are underway to develop geothermal facilities in eleven African countries (Algeria, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Zambia and Uganda).

## **Natural Resources**

Despite colonial and neo-colonial plunder, Africa is still endowed with large amounts of hitherto unknown natural wealth. The *Economic Report on Africa* (2016: xxi) indicates that Africa epitomises commodity dependence by exporting huge natural resources such as minerals and oil, as well as cash crops like cocoa, tobacco, cotton, coffee, rubber, etc., in raw form, thereby generating minimal benefits to the continent with the consequent increase of poverty and joblessness. According to Kaberuka (2013: 3), Africa has more than



122 billion barrels of proven oil reserves (12% of world's oil), 500 trillion cubic feet of gas reserves and 50% of the world's gold; 90% of chromium and platinum group metals, 20% of the world's copper and significant deposits of bauxite and other raw materials. As reflected above, Africa has also 60% of the world's uncultivated arable land. Africa is, therefore, blessed with more than 30% of global resources share. The past decade has witnessed increased efforts to ensure sustainable utilisation of natural resources and corporate social responsibility. There are numerous opportunities for investment in mining and oil industries so that the raw materials are processed locally into mineral, petroleum and chemical products. This will surely ensure value addition, best revenue and beneficiation. It is, therefore, envisaged that in the post-2016 era of growing scarcity, resource-rich Africa will shift away from being a marginal supplier of raw materials, to tap and harness the full potential of its natural resources by diversifying into greater value addition, through processing and marketing.

### **African demographic dividend and urbanisation**

Africa's people are in fact its greatest resource. The world over, Africa has the fastest growing and most youthful and increasingly better educated population (*Economic Report on Africa 2016*: xxii). Currently, Africa's 200 million people are aged between 15 and 24 years constituting 20% of the continent's population. According to AU Commission chairperson, Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma (2014), by 2025, a quarter of the world's young people will be Africans and by 2050 African population will cross the two billion mark thereby becoming considerably large than either China or India. Above all, at this historical juncture, 60% of Africa's about 1.05 billion population is below 35 years. This is, undoubtedly, a huge resource which if properly tapped, harnessed, adequately skilled and capacitated may propel Africa to global stardom in manufacturing, ICT and service industry. Arguably, the youth bulge will result in an increase in the size of the work force, a decrease in dependency ratios, increased national savings and accelerated urbanisation. It is imperative for the continent to receive support from countries like China, Russia and

even the West, so as to engage in capacity building programmes for these youths.

A rapidly expanding middle class due to urbanisation can provide further impetus for the growth and transformation of Africa. 34% of the continent is middle class thereby providing a large consumer market of more than 355 million people. As much as 40% of Africans currently live in cities, this is expected to increase to 60% in the next decade. Conversely, this dramatic growth will significantly augment Africa's importance in the world as a place of opportunities, a development pole, and investment destination (Kgomoeswana 2014). Put succinctly, the demographic dynamics of Africa comprising a young increasing population and a growing number of urban people with disposable incomes that drive domestic demand provide the necessary dividend for industrial development, continental growth, and investment opportunities for the private sector. It is also important to note that an expanding middleclass ensures a corresponding rising demand for treatments against chronic conditions associated with prosperity thereby providing opportunities for the growth of pharmaceutical industry. Yet, care must be taken to realise that with the growing challenge of youth unemployment, population growth will remain a double edged sword. All the same, with rightful support, such as imparting of skills and vocational training, and domestic policies in place to, *inter-alia*, promote job creation, unique opportunities exist for the industrialisation and growth of the African continent in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## **Human development**

Africa has made considerable progress in many benchmarks of human development. Many Africans are currently healthier, live longer, are more educated, and have better access to various goods and services. In the period 2000-2010, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Mali, Mozambique, Burundi and Niger have been among the top ten Human Development Index movers. Africa continues to make good progress in convalescing access to education and promoting girls education in a manner comparable to that of India. The task now is

to improve on tertiary education. According to Professor Ajayi (2006), universities in Africa, as elsewhere throughout the world, must shape the thrust of technological advancement, innovation and development of African countries through research, teaching, community service and synergies with other universities in other regions. In this vein, AU has established the Pan African University (PAU) comprising five campuses spread geographically on the continent. In the post-2016 era the continent requires technical and financial support to ensure successful implementation on the PAU programmes. Alongside E-learning, this is aimed at achieving an unprecedented skills revolution in Africa. It is envisaged that such a skills revolution would also help in addressing severe challenges currently faced by the continent on the health front.

## **Gender and women empowerment**

AU envisions a just and peaceful environment where men and women live dignified harmonious lives and benefit equally from socio-economic development. The past decade has witnessed incredible strides by AU with regard to gender and women empowerment. Representation of women in decision making positions has increased and by 2011 the proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments was only surpassed by developed countries and Latin America. The legal frameworks supporting women endeavours have been developed. Rwanda, South Africa, Mozambique, Angola, Tanzania, Burundi and Uganda have achieved the 30% benchmark of women parliamentarians, while Ethiopia, Tunisia and Sudan are close to reaching the benchmark. Various continental and regional legal instruments such as the AU Constitutive Act (2000); AU Gender Policy (2009); African Women's Decade (2010); Fund for African women; and Solemn Declaration, have been tailor-made to entrench gender equity and women's economic empowerment, and in turn to foster development of Africa. Nevertheless, comparative to other regions, women's employment outside agriculture is low. Africa's score in 2009 stood at 32.6% compared to 41.7 for East Asia and 43% for Latin America and the Caribbean. The majority of women employed outside

agriculture are found in the informal sector which is punctuated by low earnings, lack of social protection and vulnerability. The African Women's Decade (AWD) 2010-2020 aims at further empowering women to become drivers of continental development, prosperity and renaissance. Undoubtedly, more concrete steps need to be taken to ensure success by 2020 or to foster women empowerment outside the informal sector.

### **Interconnectedness of peace, security and sustainable development**

It is important to note that peace conditions development, just as development conditions peace. Development and peace building practices, objectives and processes have expanded to embrace one another. Both concepts refer to process of socio-economic change and stability that leads towards greater quality of life, in developing and developed countries. As already pointed above, development encompasses social and environmental aspects, and emphasises good governance as a basis for structured, inclusive and sustainable growth. Peace includes human safety and its precondition, as well as basic socio-economic cooperation capable of promoting sustainable development over a long period. As such, the intertwining of peace, security and development in the post-2016 African development agenda is paramount. As former UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan (2005) stated: "In an increasing interconnected world, progress in the areas of development, security and human rights must go hand in hand. There will be no development without security and no security without development. And both development and security also depend on respect of human rights and the rule of law." Insecurity in North Africa, Central Africa and West Africa (Nigeria in particular) in recent years and the consequent effects on respective economies is a typical example of the interconnectedness of peace, stability and development. Peace would, therefore, be the best preventive measure for conflicts in the post-2016 period, as it would pave the way for dialogue, cooperation and compromise, ultimately making it the best framework for sustainable development in Africa. Sustainable development would also generate employment, improve

livelihood, and create a basis for durable peace and stability. It follows that there is no development without peace, and there is no peace without all-inclusive growth and raising quality of living for all.

Long term development in post-2016 period will not be achieved in the absence of security, and short term security operations will not bring about sustainable benefits if they would not be coordinated with long term development efforts. It is therefore critical, in the post-2016 African development agenda, to consolidate peace and stability, promote poverty reduction, rule of law and good governance, extend legitimate state authority, and prevent countries from relapsing into conflict in order to enhance economic growth and sustainable development. Admittedly, good governance is crucial for sustained and inclusive economic growth and building capable states in Africa. By and large, the post-2016 African development agenda should be punctuated by conflict-sensitive development or the conflict-sensitive approach to development and assistance in which sustainable development is connected to durable peace and stability. This will hopefully result in a comprehensive approach to development that can provide better answers to complex needs of fragile environments where poverty and conflict in Africa will be addressed simultaneously. Peace and development in Africa will in turn promote global peace and sustainable development. As Steve Killelea (2012) argues, peace is the essential prerequisite of cooperation, inclusiveness and social equity necessary to solve global challenges, let alone empower the international institutions needed to regulate the challenges.

### **African Union Agenda 2063**

At the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of OAU/AU in 2013 the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of AU mandated the AUC to develop the continental Action Plan - Agenda 2063 (2014:9), through a people-driven process for the realization of the vision of the AU for “an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in global arena.” Agenda 2063 is an endogenous, Shared Strategic Framework for Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development, for Africa’s transformation

over 50 years. The choice of a 50-year timeframe must be understood for its significance within the context of the 50th Anniversary of the establishment of the OAU in 1963 and the need for the continent to take stock of its past challenges and achievements and set its long-term vision and goal to be realized when the AU will be marking centenary celebrations of the OAU.

According to Dlamini-Zuma (2014), Agenda 2063 allows Africans to envisage "... an Africa that is transformed, with vibrant and inclusive economies, free from the burden of poverty, hunger, conflict and disease, and that is integrated and connected through transport networks (including a Pan-African high-speed train that connects all our capitals and commercial centres), connected through ICT and with free movement of people and goods." It is within this framework that the agenda sets landmarks for the priority areas that will make the vision a reality. Chief among the priorities is the investments in African people: their health, nutrition, access to shelter, sanitation and water, as well as expanding quality education, and strengthening science, technology, innovation and research. By and large, Agenda 2063 seeks to harness the continent's comparative advantages such as its people, history and cultures; natural resources; position and repositioning in the world. The framework aims at engendering amongst others: equitable and people-centred growth and development; eradicate poverty; develop human capital; build social assets, infrastructure and public goods; empower women and youth; promote lasting peace and security; strengthen and develop effective, strong democratic developmental states; participatory and accountable governance institutions to fulfil the African Dream.

Agenda 2063 must be viewed as a continuation of the Pan African drive over centuries for self-determination, progress and freedom, and is central to the realization of the African renaissance and century. In the spirit of Pan Africanism, Agenda 2063 seeks to galvanize and bond in action all Africans and the Diaspora around the common vision of a peaceful, integrated and prosperous Africa, driven by its citizens and taking its rightful place in the world. It is envisaged as an inclusive framework, which provides internal coherence and coordination to continental, regional and national frameworks and plans adopted by the OAU and AU, Members states

and RECs (AUC, Agenda 2063, 2014: 10). It also affords policy space for individual and collective actions to realise the continental vision of a thriving, integrated, peaceful and secure Africa.

The agenda came at a historical juncture of great opportunities for Africa, with optimistic movements on the political, social and economic fronts. It is noteworthy that Africa continues to face the challenge of overcoming the legacy of colonialism, exploitation, underdevelopment and marginalization. Africa's envisaged transformation must be understood in the context of an unfolding worldwide situation and trends, including the ongoing realignments of the global economic, geopolitical, security and social landscapes; changes and advances in technology, production, trade, knowledge and labour markets; the opportunities presented by global demographic trends and the growing global middle classes in emerging and developing countries and regions. By 2063 Africa's share of the world's GDP is projected to be only 10% in spite of her increased population of more than 30% of world population (AUC, Agenda 2063, 2014: 10-11). Africa's 'liberation' agenda must change this GDP trajectory, with industrialization as the key driver, linked with agriculture and food security. Above all, the uncertainty in the global environment, and the potential of external shocks that may hammer on Africa's trajectory, highlight the need for Africa to build resilience to mitigate and benefit from such changes.

Africa's engagement with the rest of the world continues to be defined by the ebbs and flows of demand for its natural resources and primary products; the migration of its peoples (forced or otherwise), but also by its contributions to worldwide culture, geopolitics and to progressive human ideals of progress, tolerance, freedom and justice, as articulated by the Pan African movement. For Agenda 2063 to succeed, Africa needs to take charge of its global narrative and brand, to ensure that it resonates with continental realities, aspirations, priorities and Africa's position in the world. As such, Agenda 2063 reaffirms African unity and solidarity in the face of continued external interferences. To enhance Africa's position in the world requires the strengthening of African common positions, priorities and perspectives on matters of global importance (AUC, Agenda 2063, 2014: 11).

All in all, the hub of Agenda 2063 is on social, economic and political rejuvenation that links the past, present and the future. It seeks to create a new generation of Pan Africanists that will harness the lessons learnt and use them as building blocks to consolidate the hope and promise of the Founders for a true renaissance of Africa. Therefore, it should be fully comprehended as a unique opportunity to recreate and put the African narrative into perspective with a view of enthusing and energizing the African population to implement an achievable agenda for unity, peace and sustainable development in the 21st century.

### **Rising Africa and global implications**

Africa is, therefore, envisaged as the growth continent of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This is epitomised by the emergence of a new catch phrase, *viz.* ‘Africa rising’. Africa, both as a continent and as the sum of individual sovereign states, is envisaged to lead the new patterns of growth for the foreseeable future. Admittedly, Africa is a diverse continent and this diversity should be tapped and harnessed in its sustainable development agenda. It is imperative that African countries learn and build on each other’s positive experiences in crafting models of development. Lamy (2013) argues that Kenya has already distinguished itself in the area of the delivery of financial services, particularly the mobile money transfer and mobile banking. Rwanda has become a learning centre for institution building and public management. The emergency of a robust information technology industry has made Ghana one of the region’s attractive investment centres and Angola has made remarkable progress in rebuilding infrastructure to emerge top in the ranking of performance in Sub-Saharan Africa (*Economic Report on Africa 2016*: 11). Nigeria has distinguished itself in thriving service sector and some manufacturing. Not only has it provided Africa’s biggest market for private jets but its emerging middleclass fuels one of the world’s fastest-growing markets for champagne and cognac. Above all, its dynamic movie industry, known as ‘Nollywood,’ turns out 1000 films a year and has the world’s third-highest revenues behind U. S.A and India. Goldman Sachs predicts that Nigeria’s economy will be bigger



than Canada's or Italy's by 2050 – and not far behind Germany's economy (Birrell 2014: 13).

Africa has changed from a land of pessimism to the land of opportunity. It offers the global world numerous investment opportunities in many sectors such as manufacturing, ICT, agriculture, renewable and clean energy, infrastructure, pharmaceutical industry, cultural industry, tourism, fast-food firms, hotel chains, soccer industry and many more. Above all, it offers opportunities for partnering in addressing global issues such as climate change, peace and security, transnational crimes, and in promoting human development and capacity building through education, vocational training and healthcare, among many others. A paradigm shift on the perception of Africa is blowing continentally and globally. Investors already in Africa, mostly from Brazil, Russia, China and India, are overwhelming positive, while those who fail to see this, mostly from the West and without a presence in Africa, are likely to regret their anachronistic attitude. Indeed, it is becoming evident that the future of the world heavily depends on the future of Africa. The 21<sup>st</sup> century is envisaged as the century of African renaissance, the century during which Africa will become the locus of global sustainable development.

The BRICS countries will benefit immensely from a rising Africa much as the latter would benefit from the development experience of the former. China, in particular, has deep historical ties with African countries dating back to the liberation struggle from the 1950s which she fully and unswervingly supported. The political relationship has been upgraded to a strategic partnership in which Africa has become a vital cog in China's pursuit of sustainable economic development. Consequently, China has become the biggest trading partner and one of the key investors in Africa. China-African economic co-operation has morphed from one of mainly economic assistance to a complex model of co-operation in trade, investment, finance and technology. In 2012 China's investment in Africa stood at US\$21.23 billion while annual bilateral trade topped US\$200 billion. Given the scale of Africa's infrastructure gap, these investments present Africa with the much needed impetus to rapid social and economic development. According to Yafei (2014),

Africa's investment in China, from sovereign funds, surpassed US\$10 billion by beginning of 2014. By the end of 2012 more than 2000 Chinese companies had invested in over 50 African countries in areas ranging from finance, aerospace and manufacturing, to logistics and real estate, in addition to traditional sectors like agriculture, mining and infrastructure construction (Forum on China-African Co-operation Document 2012). Africa stands to gain from increased trade relations with China not only as a gateway to other Asian markets but as an opportunity to draw a leaf from China's experience in the competitiveness of its industry and exports. Unlike the Western countries which provide bi-lateral and multi-lateral aid with strings, China has crossed the 'ideological' bridge of providing aid without political strings attached. As such, China's principle of sovereign and business equality will continue to give her an urge over American or European investors in Africa. It is also important to note that China and Africa share a common vision symbolised by 2020 and 2049 Dreams for China, and Agenda 2063 for Africa. The people of China and African continent could join hands in realising their dreams and share the benefits.

A new global picture could, therefore, emerge in the post-2016 period in which Africa would be viewed not so much as a destination for natural resource exploitation for foreign investors but a land of strategic opportunities for investors keenly interested in working with Africa to forge win-win partnerships. It is indeed a strategic co-operation that should inform Africa's increased engagement with emerging economies, the BRICS; as well as the traditional capitalist economies epitomised by IMF and World Bank. All forms of engagement must not be driven by Africa's abundant and untapped resources but mutual beneficial sustainable development. It is within this framework that Zhou (2012), *Africa Progress Report* (2013) and *Economic Report on Africa* (2016) call for corporate governance, *viz.*, transparency, accountability, responsibility and equity in the extractive industry. African resources in the 21<sup>st</sup> century should be sustainably managed for the benefit of African people rather than being plundered through the activities of local elites and foreign investors. This, therefore, calls not only for national, regional and

continental action, but also international community to develop multilateral systems that prevent the plunder of African resources.

## **Conclusion**

By and large, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Africa should tell its story to the world, and this research validates and amplifies the historical reality that is slowly, but increasingly, finding resonance with the global community: that Africa indeed has great prospects for rising, is open for business and sustainable development. After the first liberation against colonial and racist regimes, and the second against autocrats who often followed in the footsteps of colonial rulers, African countries are now undertaking a third liberation from political economies characterised by graft, crony capitalism, rent-seeking elitism and social inequality. During the 2000s, Africa had its best economic growth decade on record since independence, and the third liberation is aimed at ensuring that the growth process does not only reach its full potential but is also transformative and inclusive. With structural flows in some economies remaining for the foreseeable future, the global economy will unfold at three speeds – flat growth in the Euro zone; slightly better outlook in the United States and Japan; and faster growth in most developing countries, especially in Africa. With macro-economic stability in Africa; consumer demand by her growing middle class; remarkable progress in political stability and governance; new thrust in green and blue revolutions, lucrative natural resources and markets; vision and action plan embodied in Agenda 2063, Africans today should be more confident and hopeful about the future than ever before. It is envisaged that African countries would take a forward role in achieving the structural transformation they seek, greening their economies, generating jobs, and showing responsibility for long-term stewardship of the earth. It is envisaged that accelerated and profound structural transformation will be achieved in the 21<sup>st</sup> century through reallocating economic activities from less productive to more productive sectors of the economy. We also envisage African industrialization in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, focussing on regional market through increased trade before it extends to the global supply chain,

with special emphasis on agro-processed products and value addition to mineral exports. Africa's own development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century will greatly drive the development of other countries and regions and advance the common development of the human society. All in all, it is our hope that in the post-2016 period, people and business would come to Africa to see the future, let alone realise the vast opportunities for investment, co-operation in trade, finance and technology; corporate social responsibility and sustainable development. In the post-2016 period, industrialisation, regional and continental integration; blue and green revolutions; infrastructural development, and value addition on natural resources, among other factors, would help African states to consolidate peace, stabilise their economies and lay foundations for sustainable poverty-reduction and long term economic growth.

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# African Indigenous Knowledge as Panacea for Conflict Management and Transformation in Africa: The Case of *Ifá* in Nigeria

*Òkèwándé Olúnwólé Tẹ̀nógboyè*

## Introduction

Conflict simply means divergence of interest or a process whereby two or more parties attempt to “punch” the other’s goal, objective or attainment. Many contemporary sociologists have viewed conflict occurring among many groups and interest, including ethnic, religious, labour and political conflicts. Maciver and Page (1950) identified two forms of conflicts: Direct and indirect conflicts. According to them, direct conflict occurs when individuals or groups thwart or impede or injure one another in the effort to attain some goals. Indirect conflict occurs, when individuals or groups do not actually injure the efforts of another party but nevertheless, seek to attain their ends in ways which obstruct the attainment of the same ends by other.

Conflict theorists believe that disorder and instability in particular and conflict in general should be seen as normal aspect of social life. Conflict is as well believed by the conflict theorists, such as Marx (1947), Simmel (1903) and Lewis (1934) to be part of social change, transformation, development, functionalist and destructive. The problem of conflict in Africa is endemic. For instance, Ajàdí (2012: 19) argues:

Africa is often framed as a space bereft of ideas and approaches to transform herself and prosper its people. Over the years, the failures of heads of government and their approach to governing, the regular conflicts and the seemingly precarious lives of most Africans have entrenched the stereotype of the continent’s hopelessness. In fact, the most damaging example of this view was the cover of the

*Economist* of 13 May 2000, which read: ‘Africa, Hopeless continent’. Hopeless? How can a continent of over 700 million people be written off so casually?

This statement was credited to the continent of Africa because the colonial masters believed that, African countries cannot develop as a result of series of conflicts in the continent. Sequel to the incessant conflicts in Africa, it is worth the trouble, to come up with pragmatic approaches towards stemming down the level of conflicts in Africa. This chapter therefore focuses on the adoption of African indigenous knowledge, especially those embedded in the *Ifá* that is practiced among the Yorùbá of Nigeria to manage crises emanating from the interaction of people. Akintólá (1999: 1) sees *Ifá* as the philosophy of or wisdom divinely revealed to the Yorùbá deity of *Ifá*, *Òrúnmìlà*. According to Farrow (1926: 36), *Ifá* is the greatest oracle of the whole of the Yorùbá that is “consulted on all important occasions.” *Ifá* is regarded as the spokesperson not only for the gods but also for the living, this is because, *Ifá*’s knowledge and wisdom is based on the past, present and the future. The dead, among who are the ancestors and spirit beings, the present and future generations are evinced by *Ifá*. *Ifá* is regarded as the living foundation of Yorùbá culture (Abimbólá, 1977a: 14). Munoz (2003: 179) sees *Ifá*’s scope beyond the Yorùbá cultural society when he says “*Ifá* is the most universal divinity among the Yorùbá and other West African people.” *Ifá* is known to different people by different names throughout the world. For example, *Ifá* is known as *Fa* among the Fon of the Republic of Benin, *Eva* to Nupes, *Ifá* in Cuba, USA, Brazil, Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, Surinam and Togo. *Ifá* is referred to by the Ewe as *Afá*, *Ephod* by Jews, *Geomancy* by Europeans and Magasy (Odéyemí 2013: 5). With this different nomenclature across the nations of the world, the spread of *Ifá* is not in doubt.

In 2005, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) proclaimed *Ifá* as one of the 86 traditions of the world to be recognized as masterpieces of oral and intangible heritage of humanity (Robinson 2008: 1). By this proclamation, *Ifá* joined the league of heritages. Yémitàn and Ògúndélé (1970: ix) assert about *Ifá* that:

*ó jé ìmò ìjìnṣẹ́ lóṣò ara rẹ,  
 ohun tí a lè pè ní ẹ́ka ìmò sáyẹ́nsì.  
 Èkejì, ó jé oríṣú ẹ̀sìn ìbílẹ̀ ilẹ̀ Yorùbá kan.*

it is knowledge of science on its own.  
 Secondly, it is a separate Yorùbá religion.

*Ifá'*, as a religion, science or literary text, has over time been of great interest to scholars in different areas of human endeavour, like medicine, philosophy, religion, art and culture. In other words, there is no aspect of life that is not entrenched in *Ifá'*. Therefore, it is difficult to dissociate *Ifá'* from Yorùbá, because the philosophy, religion, ideology, history and science among others of the Yorùbá people are referenced from *Ifá'*. For instance, the work of Lóngé (1983: 41) discusses the links of computer science to *Ifá'* Divination. His work concludes that, the relationship of computer elements to *Ifá'*'s elements that:

That brings me to the end of my illustration of some similar basic concepts of *Ifá'* Divination and Computer science. You will probably now agree with me that *Ifá'* Divination, as an ancient Yorùbá knowledge system reveals to us the coherence, logicity, precision and profundity of the thoughts, philosophy, mathematics and computer science as known and practiced by our forefathers (and mothers) before the 11<sup>th</sup> Century A. D. well before the same ideas were rediscovered in the West in later centuries.

His work is premised on the scientific analysis, which, in the end, paved way for us to describe the relationship between the elements of computer science and *Ifá'*. Likewise, the work of McGee (1983) relates some Mathematical concepts to *Ifá'*. He based his work on mathematical theories to establish his claims. The adoption of *Ifá'* philosophy in the dispensation of justice was addressed by Òkẹwándé (2013). He concludes that the Yorùbá has a dependable judicial system that can contest with modern judicial system entrenched in

*Ifá*. *Ifá* also has its philosophy on conflict management and transformation, the challenge that is taken up in this work.

The chapter discusses how the *Ifá* epistemological understanding influences the various types of conflicts management, including: preventive (pre-conflict) and corrective (post-conflict), which is management of conflict after it had occurred, that is, the cure to conflict. It examines conflict management methods such as non-retaliation, tolerance, patience, power, and forgiveness as well as conflict transformation. A chart showing the inter-party or individual's conflicts in relation to transformation is to be provided for analysis. It is further argued, the more Africans are able to explore their traditional institutions and values to solve their problems or challenges, the better for peaceful and harmonious co-existence, thereby, transforming the entire continent. As well, this is an attempt at enhancing African solutions to Africans problems.

### **Conflict management: Types, causes and solution**

Conflict management is dealing with, or how conflict is handled with a means to achieve the status quo (resorting to the initial or before the conflict period). There are various methods of conflict management, especially as contained in *Ifá*. This work discusses non-retaliation, tolerance, patience, mediation, reconciliation and negotiation as some of the ways of resolving conflicts. Some of these methods are seen as ways to prevent misunderstanding or disagreement from resulting to conflict, since; there may be no conflict without initial disagreement. It is easier to manage crises from degenerating into conflict, than to manage crises. An inability to manage conflict may lead to a war. The *Ifá* philosophy prefers to nip conflict in the bud, so as not to degenerate into a war. In other words, crises should be managed from generating to crises. This among the Yorùbá people is encapsulated in the proverb that guides everyday conduct which says *ìgbóná gbooru láà jòpòlò bó bá pé anọ rẹ máa n'yi ni*. Translated it means, frog flesh is better eaten when it is hot; afterwards, the flesh turns turgid. In other words, issues at conflict should be promptly addressed. Delay, postponement or deferment may cause destructions of lives and properties. The

Yorùbá also pleads with the parties in disagreement to “sheave their swords,” so that the disagreement does not degenerate to conflict. This is captured in the proverb that *omọ àlẹ̀ ní rínú tí kẹ̀ í bí, bèẹ̀ sì ní omọ àlẹ̀ ní a máa n bẹ̀ tí kẹ̀ í gbà*. That is, a bastard will not be hungry on matter that demands to be temperamental, but a bastard is begged and refuses to pave way for peace. In other words, ones anger must be managed or controlled so as not to cause civil disorder or conflict. *Ifá* teaches that, it is better not to be at loggerhead with another. But since, it is naturally impossible to maintain total peace always. They create rooms to accommodate settlement of dispute. The Yorùbá do say that *bí a bá jà tí a tún ré, eré ò lè dàbí àpilẹ̀ṣe mọ*. That is, if we fight and reconcile again, the friendship can no longer be as before. To this effect, *Ifá* gives preference to the prevention of crises rather than to manage it. This means management of crises is costlier than its prevention. The *ẹ̀ṣẹ-Ifá Ìròsùn Èlérin, Ọ̀dẹgbolá* (2014: 242) discourages any form of conflict or misunderstanding. The *Ifá* corpus claims that:

*Ọ̀rúnmilà ní kẹ̀ á mọ̀ jà ló dùn.*  
*Ifá mo ní kẹ̀ á mọ̀ jà ló dùn Bara Àgbon m̀rẹ̀gún.*  
*Ifá ní tí a bá jà, inú kẹ̀ í dùn mọ̀...*

*Ọ̀rúnmilà* says what is preferable is that we should not fight.  
*Ifá*, the father of *Àgbon m̀rẹ̀gún*,  
 I says preferably we should not fight,  
*Ifá* says should we fight,  
 we will be unhappy.

However, since the tongue and the mouth do fight each other sometimes, there are traditional precautions to minimize disagreement so as not to snowball into conflict. There are three things that the Yorùbá will not underrate: fire, sickness and conflict. A stick of matches can burn a whole city, so is conflict or war. Most of the time, the language in relation to the dead is “after a brief illness.” There is no little sickness that cannot claim life. Likewise, any conflict between two parties or nations may lead to war, claiming millions of lives. The Yorùbá frowns at a situation, whereby, conflict

degenerates to claiming of lives. To the Yorùbá people, *bí a bá n'jà bí i ká kú kó*, that is, conflict should not degenerate to claiming lives. To this end, the Yorùbá people encourage the virtue of *omoluabi* well behaved to all issues. Some of the virtues of *omoluabi*, are *inàpèlẹ* good character and *Ìwà rere* (well mannered). A well behaved individual is regarded as *omoluabi*. These virtues guide the individual's behaviours in the Yorùbá society Abimbólá (1975: 389-420). To the Yorùbá people, *eni tí a bá pè ní Fólórúnṣọ kò gbodò fókùn ògèdè gun òpẹ* or that, whoever is Fólórúnṣọ (literally means in God's care) must not climb a palm-tree with a banana's rope. Meaning that, one should not risk something naturally known to cause a hazard. The *Ifá* corpus, *Ìwòrì* fore-warned and reminds the Yorùbá that:

*Ìwòrì tejú mọhun tí nṣeni.*  
*Awo má fẹjá ighà gun òpẹ*  
*mó pé nitori pé o ti ṣawo ko tó fighà tó ti já tán gun òpẹ.*  
*Ìwòrì tejú mọhun tó nṣeni..*  
*Awo mó fìbinú yòbẹ*  
*Ìjà kẹ i dé kòrò gún ra won káwo wólé yòbẹ.*  
*Ìwòrì tejú mọhun tó nṣeni.*  
*Awo jinnà sẹjò tá à bẹ lór.í*  
*Awo kẹ i léjò*  
*Ìwòrì wá tejú mọhun tí nṣeni.*  
*Káwo mó sán bantẹ awo...*

*Ìwòrì* mind your own business.  
*Awo* don't climb palm-three with partially cut rope  
 don't say you are somebody and be committing unlawful acts.  
*Ìwòrì* mind your own business.  
*Awo* don't draw out a knife while temperamental  
 don't because of a little misunderstanding draw out a knife  
*Ìwòrì* mind your own business.  
*Awo*, be far from a snake with head uncut  
*Awo* do not run after a snake.  
*Ìwòrì* come and mind your own business  
 Let not *Awo* put on a wrapper of another person ... (Àládé

1978: 17).

An *omoluabi* (well behaved individual), metaphorically referred to as *Awo* in the above *Ifá* corpus, will distance himself or herself from doing something unjust or immoral and will be far from being temperamental, will be tolerant, flee evil and not trespassing by doing things unlawful. By so doing, the society will be in peace.

Another virtue of *omoluabi* is called *sùúrù* (patience) is always encouraged by *Ifá* to be applied to all issues in life. There is no stage of conflict that *Ifá* excludes this virtue called patience. It must be encouraged and applied to all conflict situations in human life. For instance, the Yorùbá (*Ifá*) philosophy believe that *sùúrù ni baba ìwà*, that is, morality is entrenched in patience. According to *Ifá* verses contained in Abimbólá (1975: 402):

*Ìwà rée*  
*Sùúrú ló bí i.*  
*Àkọbì Olódumare sì ni bábá rẹ nàá.*  
*Sùúrù, baba ìwà...*

And what breeds morality is patience.  
 It is the first given by *Olódumare*  
 Patience brings about morality...

It is generally believed by the Yorùbá through *Ifá* philosophy that *eni tó ní sùúrù ló lóbun gbogbo*, meaning that, whoever is patience have all things. Explaining the concept of *sùúrù*, Abimbólá succinctly puts it that:

The significance of this is that in order to have good character, a man must first of all have patience...Out of all the attributes which a man with good character have, patience is the most important of them...One must therefore be patient with people and learn to tolerate them in order to have good character...

The Yorùbá also believe that conflict occurs as a result of the denial of some rights and privileges to individuals, groups or nations.

For instance, one of the causes of conflict, especially, in a federal system of government such as Nigeria is marginalization, that is, when an ethnic group feels that they have been short-changed. This was the situation with the people of Middle-Belt in Nigeria. According to them, they were denied of some rights and privileges by the federal government of Nigeria. The Middle-Belt became intolerant of the hegemony of the Northern People Congress. In the same vein, it will be difficult to talk about political/ethnic conflict in Nigeria without reference to the declaration of State of Biafra by Lieutenant Cornel. Ojukwu on May 30, 1967. According to Adéyemọ (2000: 19):

At the end of thirty months of bitter and bloody civil war, Lt. Col. Ojukwu flew to Cote d'Ivoire (former Ivory Coast) when he knew that military victory was not on his side. A few hours later, his number two announced "Biafrans" formal surrender. This ending Africa's bloodiest civil war in the early seventies. More than a million people perished as a result of the war aimed at crushing the secession of Eastern Region from the rest of Nigeria.

The setback caused by conflict cannot be quantified. In other words, conflict should be managed early before it results to claiming of lives and properties. There were peace talks to end the political crises of Nigeria 1968. Among these are the Aburi accord (Ghana), London, United Kingdom and Kampala (Uganda). The Organization of African Unity (O. A. U.), Peace talks of Addis-Ababa under the auspices of O. A. U. and Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia. The talks could not yield any positive result as both sides in conflicts unyielding to shift for peace. In the words of Chinua Achebe, the Biafran Information Services during the war said "that Igbo people had been discriminated against and that they have been marginalized" (p. 20). In theory, both Nigeria and "Biafra" sides were supposed to have genuine reconciliation, rehabilitation and reconstruction. But, in practice, it was very difficult. According to Hobbes (1977: 21):

The irrational human nature leads individuals or groups to a state of war in which the life of no one is secure. This civil strife or disorder



and instability are caused by human nature or irrational human nature. One of the causes of conflict is human nature such as anger; aggressions, cruelty, brutality and hostility, these negative human values, tendencies together produce violent behaviour.

These two forms of conflicts, political and ethnic occur mostly in a multi-ethnic state or nation; where there is an ethnic dominated political party in order to have a share from the government. Ethnic differences are one of the commonest causes of conflicts in Nigeria. For instance, any political party formed is likely to gain popularity in one region than the other, if such a political party rules, other ethnic groups are likely to be marginalized. The Kano riot of 1953 in Nigeria is a good example. As noted by Adéyẹmọ (2000: 15):

Regrettably, the 1953 Kano riot widened the gap between the three regions in Nigeria, especially, between Northern and Southern Nigeria. For the first time the Northerners talked openly about the possibility of secession rather than accepting humiliation from the Southern counterparts. In addition, Western Nigeria which was governed by the Action Group (A. G.) a political party formed by the late Chief Ọbáfẹ́mí Awólówò, threatened secession over the non-inclusion of Lagos in Western Region in the 1954 Constitution.

The Action Group conflict of 1962 led to the State of Emergency in the Western Nigeria. The Benin and Delta provinces also felt agitated, which led to the creation of Mid-Western region from the Western Region. It is noted that this did not solve the political conflicts in Nigeria.

*Ifá* teaches that there is no any substantial development in an atmosphere of conflict. There is no any benefit as a result of conflict for an individuals, groups or nations. *Ifá* philosophy teaches that whoever inherits patience inherits all good things in life. Patience will prevent an individual, group or nation from anger which breeds conflict. According to Agboọ́lá (2012: pp. 127 & 8) as contained in *Ogbè yónú* that

*Ìbínú ò ẹ̀ nńkankan fún nì*  
*Sùúrù nì baba ìwà.*

*Agbà tó ní sùúrù oun ghogbo ló ní.  
 A díá fún Igúnnugún Ògègè  
 tí sọmọ Olódumare Agòtún  
 Oba atẹni léjẹléjẹ fori sapeji omi  
 Níjọ tí nsogbogbo àrùn  
 tí nnara kíkà aláilẹ dídẹ.  
 Ìbínú ò ẹ nńkankan fún ni  
 Sùúrù ni baba ìwà.  
 Agbà tó ní sùúrù oun ghogbo ló ní...  
 Ẹni tí ò bínú nire rè nńọ.*

Anger does not do anyone good,  
 patience is the father of character  
 The elder who has patience has everything  
 Ifa's message for the Vulture  
 one of the children of God.  
 The king who uses the mat as the sky and water as the pillow;  
 when Vulture was suffering from undisclosed illness  
 and found it difficult to do normal work.  
 Anger does not do anyone good,  
 patience is the father of character  
 An elder who has patience has everything  
 Whoever avoids anger is blessed with all good things...

This *Ifá* corpus teaches that patience in all situations brings peace and series of development and progress to mankind, since the major cause of conflict is as a result of human behaviour. *Odu Ifá Èjìogbè* relates this with the story of snakes of different species, associated with different characters. These snakes are traditionally known as *Oka*, *Erè*, *Sèbé* and *Níní*. *Níní* is the youngest of them all. It was the only one that was made the chief as a result of its gentle character. *Sèbé* misbehaved the attitude that disqualified it from occupying the chieftaincy position. According to the *Ifá* corpus (with author's translation):

*Inú bíbí ní i sọ ibi tí wọn tiná  
 Alájàngbìlẹ níní fira rè éhàn*

*Ó tún gbé'se rẹ́ dé, orúko nù sọ ní*  
*A dífá fún Ọkà*  
*A dífá fún Erè*  
*A dífá fún Sèbè*  
*A dífá fún Nìní*  
*Tí sọmọ ìkẹyìn wọn lénje-lénje*  
*Níjọ tí wọn nloọ jẹ Oyè Alápa-nràwé*  
*Nílé Oníyànjà*  
*Èbọ ní wọn ní kí wọn wá ẹ*  
*Nìní nìkan ní nbe lẹyìn tí nṣẹbọ*  
*Lóòótó lá mú Nìní jọba*  
*Sèbè ló sìwà wù, ló bá iṣẹ è jẹ*  
*Lóòótó lá mú Nìní jọba.*

Excessive anger portrays their upbringing  
 He who ignores mediation easily exposes himself  
 “You have come again with your bad attitude” will only give  
 one a bad name;  
 These were the *Ifá* cast for *Ọkà*, the Cobra  
 And to *Erè*, the Boa constrictor  
 And to *Sèbè*, the Black poisonous snake  
 And to *Nìní*, the Beautiful snake  
 When they were going to become the *Alápa-nràwé*, the  
 King in the household of *Oníyànjà*  
 They were advised to offer *ẹbọ*  
 Only *Nìní* complied with the advice  
 Truly, we have installed *Nìní* as *Ọba* (king) is the  
 Misbehaviour of *Ọkà* that ruined his career  
 We have installed *Nìní* as *Ọba*  
 The misbehaviour of *Erè* was it that ruined his career  
 We have installed *Nìní* as *Ọba*  
 The misbehaviour of *Sèbè* was it that ruined his future  
 Truly, we have installed *Nìní* as *Ọba*.”

In Yorùbá tradition, *Ọkà* is associated with wickedness, *Sèbè* with  
 temperamental and *Erè* with harmful attitude, but *Nìní*, is not harmful  
 but gentle. The natural behaviors of *Ọkà*, *Erè* and *Sèbè* which will not

bring peaceful atmosphere, but conflict disqualified them from being rulers and leaders. The *Ifá* corpus, *Ìròsùntúúrùpòṇ*, as contained in Akíntólá (1999: 178) describes this situation with *Igbá* (calabash), who cannot achieve anything because of series of conflicts it involved itself in. The question was put to *Igbá* by the *Ifá* corpus that:

*Igbá, èèṣe t'á ò rí ọ l'ójà t'irún-ni?*

*Ìjà ni;*

*Àwo, èèṣe t'á ò rí ọ l'ójà t'irún-ni?*

*Ìjà ni;*

*Ìjà ni ò jé....*

Calabash dish, why did you not come to the last fifth-day market?

It is conflict;

You container, did you not come to the last fifth-day market?

It is conflict;

It is conflict that barred me ...

The *Ifá* corpus states that in an atmosphere of ranchos, generated by human attitude is detrimental to peace and development.

Religion is also one of the causes of conflict between individuals or groups. These religious conflicts occur over religious beliefs, doctrines and practices in Africa and across the world. There have been series of religious conflict in Nigeria. For instance, towards the end of 20<sup>th</sup> century religions violence erupted in some parts of Nigeria with the declaration of Sharia laws. On 27 October 1999, Zamfara State declared the state under the Sharia law. As Ahmed Sani Yerima, the Governor of Zamfara that proclaimed the State as an Islamic State declared that “without Sharia law Islamic faith is valueless.” He appealed to other Northern States to follow the example, the attempt by the Kaduna State that brought about religious conflict towards February 2000. The reason behind this crises was as a result of religious conflict, in which Christians that constitute about half of the population felt they have been marginalized. According to Adéyẹmọ (2000: 21) “If the violent had not been properly handled by the Ọbasanjó administration, it would

have led to another tragic “civil war” in Nigeria”. This is to affirm that there is likely to be conflict, when there is a clash of religious interests. In other words, when a party, individual or nation feel that their religious beliefs have been marginalized they may foment conflict. The *Ifá* philosophy teaches and preaches religious tolerance by saying that all religions worship the same God. The difference is only in the mode of worship. Religious practices are observed through different ways, but towards the same goal. For instance, the use of white cloth by the Islamic worshippers with that of the white garment Christians worshippers, including the white garment worn for Christian baptism purpose and that of the white garment worn by the *Ọ̀batalá* worshippers symbolizes holiness in all the three modes of worship mentioned above. Therefore, there is no need for worshippers of one religion to look down on the worshippers’ of other religions. According to *Odu Ọ̀fun Ọ̀yèkú* contained in *Sàlámì* (2002: 873):

...Orò yíì là n' sẹ̀ bí àwọn babaláwo bá ta aṣọ funfun  
 Ọ̀un náà ni ọ̀n n' sẹ̀ ní Mèkà  
 t' ọ̀n bá sán aṣọ funfun...  
 Èní jẹ́ onígbagbọ́ yoo lodo  
 yoo sẹ̀ itẹ̀bomi.  
 Wọ̀n ó fun ní aṣọ funfun...  
 Bẹ̀ẹ̀ náà ni lodo Ọ̀lọ́ya,  
 Eléégún,  
 Ọ̀sà,  
 Gbogbo aláwo pátá...

It is the same cult performed by the *babaláwo* wearing white cloth.

The same in Mecca

When they put on white garments...

The believers will go to the river for baptism

She will be in white clothing.

The *Ọ̀ya* worshippers,

The Masquerades' worshippers,

and all the religion cultists...

*Ifá* calls for tolerance across religions, even when somebody is converted into another religion. S/he must not be waged war against. *Ọ̀rúnmilà* says he never fought his children for converting into Islamic religion. *Ifá* corpus established that Islam was first practiced by *Gámíbí*, *Kílátù* and *Dáúdù*, who were all the children of *Ọ̀rúnmilà* (The *Ifá* progenitor). According to *Odu Ọ̀túá Méjì* verses two and three, contained in Abimbólá (1968: 96-9), the children took their father's cloth and turbaned with it.

*Wón sì wé e gèlè nàà sórí bàntùtù*  
*Wón na igi mērin sílẹ̀ nìbùúnìbùú*  
*Wón wá kó sí ààrin igi nàà*  
*Wón n̄senu w̄yẹw̄yẹ*  
*Wón n̄ fori kanlẹ̀,*  
*Wón n̄ dide*  
*Wón n̄ kúnlẹ̀,*  
*Wón sì n̄ nàró*  
*Babá won sá n̄wó won ni.*  
*Wón n̄ se bẹ̀ẹ̀ lẹ̀marùnún lójoojúmọ̀*  
*Ó wá rántí Ifá tí àwọn awo rẹ̀ kẹ̀ fún un*  
*Kò bá won jà...*

They wrapped the cloth on their heads in big manner  
 They crossed four sticks in four breaths  
 They went to the middle of the sticks formed.  
 They were voicing silently with only their lips moving  
 They were worshipping with their head touching the ground.  
 They were standing up.  
 They were bending down.  
 Their farther was just looking at them.  
 They were doing this five times daily.  
 He then remembered an *Ifá* divination to him...  
 He did not fight them...

*Ifá* is against any form of religious conflict in whatever situation. In order to ensure the sustainability of peace and security in Yorùbá communities, the divinities were not left behind in governance. As

Káyòdé (1984: 4) argues “each divinity has a role to play in the ‘government’ set-up of life in the community...” By this, the African experienced a conflict free society before the colonial administration was instituted. This is because; African religion was part of their culture. According to Ìṣòlá (2010: 36) “if you leave out the religion, you are left with deformed culture. Therefore, safeguarders themselves must espouse African traditional religion.” African nations hardly have religious conflict before the coming of the whites to their communities. Religion is a powerful or potent means, it transcends to other aspects of human lives such as politics. In one of the Nigerian dailies, *The Nation* of October 6, 2012, it was reported by Ṣòbòwálé that “overall, religion hang like a sword of Damocles over contemporary local and international politics and relations, as well as security.” This means that religion is a recipe for peace and security. To uphold the Yorùbá virtue of *omolúabí* referred to earlier, there must be religious tolerance. To the Yorùbá people, *ìwà lèsìn* meaning that religion is character. The character of a religious faithfulness must be Godly. According to Àtandá (1980: 29) “...the Yorùbá feared violating moral laws, particularly in their dealings with their fellow human beings. The results of all this was that the rate of crime among the Yorùbá up to 1800 was extremely low...”

There can also be conflict as a result of retaliation. *Ifá* is against retaliation. The Yorùbá people believe that vengeance belongs to God. This is associated with forgiveness. When a party or individual feels offended, there should be readiness for the individual to forgive. The *Ifá* corpus, *Oḍù Òdí Ògbè* as contained in Salámi (2002), even though, *Ìgbín* (snail) got the wife of *Òòṣà*, since *Òòṣà* noticed the remorse in him, pleading for forgiveness, haven recognized his mistake, he forgave him and there was peace. The *Oḍù Ifá* enjoined all that:

*Afi kí Òòṣà ó forí jì oun ló kù.  
 Òòṣà bá n bínú bọ.  
 Ká ti gbọ pé Ìgbín ló gbòbìnrin Ọun?  
 Bí ti n bọ lẹ́dẹ́kán,  
 Ìyáalù Ìgbín bá nàró,  
 Ó n pé fí jìn*

Òòṣà, f'Ògèlè jìn mí  
 Òòṣà, f'Ògèlè jìn mí  
 Òòṣà, f'Ògèlè jìn mí  
 Jìn mí  
 f'Ògèlè jìn mí  
 f'Ògèlè jìn mí...  
 Òòṣà ní, haa  
 Oun á ti ṣe bayüü?  
 Ènì ó gba obìnrin òun naà ló tun bẹ òun yüü  
 Ifá pé ghogbo ènì tó bá n wá iforijì  
 pé ká dákun ká ṣe suúrù  
 tí kù ba n ṣe ènì tó n ṣagídí.

There is no way, but that Òòṣà should forgive him.  
 Òòṣà was coming furiously,  
 How can we say that it is Ìgbín of all that took his wife?  
 As he was coming afar off,  
 the chief drummer of Ìgbín stood up drumming.  
 He was saying,  
 forgive me of the act/misdeed.  
 Òòṣà fardon me of Ògèlè's matter.  
 Òòṣà pardon me of Ògèlè's matter.  
 Òòṣà fardon me of Ògèlè's matter.  
 Forgive me.  
 Forgive me of Ògèlè's issue.  
 Òòṣà then said, what should I do now?  
 The one that took his wife  
 is the one pleading for forgiveness now.  
 Ifá enjoined that whoever wants forgiveness  
 should please exercise patience with the one that offended  
 them.  
 Those that shows penitence or remorse... (p. 154).

Ifá' is categorical about forgiveness as one of the pre-conflict resolutions. Forgiveness will pave way to avert conflict. Ifá' enjoined that, peaceful co-existence will lead to development in the society. More importantly, African leaders and oppositions should learn to



forgive wrong doers and put the past behind them. Therefore, instead of going into conflict or war, they argue that *fijà f'Ólórúnjà fowó lérán* meaning that, let God fight on your behalf, keep on looking.

*Ifá* encourages individuals, groups and nations not to retaliate, even, when one has been offended or wounded. *Òrúnmìlà* had this experience in the city of Ìlawè, in Èkìtì State of Nigeria. He was attacked with dangerous weapons such as cutlasses, clubs and guns. Instead of challenging them to fight by retaliating, *Òrúnmìlà* says, he never fought back to revenge against his enemies but instead was chanting *Ifá* song, *ìyèrè*; appealing to the people of Ìlawè, that, he is a peace lover and would not want trouble makers to destroy him. The enemies abandoned *Òrúnmìlà*. He prevailed over them by “offering an olive branch” to his enemies. According to *Odu Èjùgbè* verse five, contained in Abimbólá (1968: 18):

...*A díá fún Ọrúnmìlà*  
*Ifá nṣòwò epo relé Ìlawè.*  
*Gbogbo ará Ìlawè nìyí, ikà ní wọ́n.*  
*Ìgbà tí Ọrúnmìlà rúbọ́ tán,*  
*lọ bá múra, ó di ilé Ìlawè.*  
*Bí àwọ́n ará Ìlawè tí fojú kan Ọrúnmìlà*  
*Ní wọ́n bá dìdè sí í.*  
*Èlòmíràn mú gbóngbó;*  
*Èlòmíràn mú kùmò.*  
*Nwọ́n ló kú ibi tí Ọrúnmìlà ó wọ.*  
*Ní Eṣù bá di atégún,*  
*Ó tẹ lé Ọrúnmìlà.*  
*Ó ní kí Ọrúnmìlà ó má ẹe bá wọ́n já,*  
*Orin ní kí ó máa fí wọ́n kọ.*  
*Ní Ọrúnmìlà bá fí ìyèrè sọbùn arò.*  
*O ní ará Ìlawè,*  
*Mo rupo o.*  
*Ará Ìlawè,*  
*Mo rupo.*  
*Epo tí mo rù,*  
*È mó mò jẹ́ ó fọ*  
*Ará Ìlawè,*

*Mo rufo.*

...cast divination for *Ọ́rúnmìlà*,  
*Ifá* was engaging in palm-oil business.  
The people of *Ìlawẹ̀* are known for wickedness.  
After *Ọ́rúnmìlà* performed sacrifice,  
He prepared, and set for *Ìlawẹ̀* town.  
As soon as the people of *Ìlawẹ̀* sighted *Ọ́rúnmìlà*  
They rose against him.  
Some took club,  
Some took stick.  
They were saying that they will see how *Ọ́rúnmìlà* will escape.  
Then, *Èṣù* turned to wind  
He followed *Ọ́rúnmìlà*.  
He told *Ọ́rúnmìlà* not to fight them,  
He should be singing of them.  
Then, *Ọ́rúnmìlà* was chanting a melodious *ìyẹ̀rẹ̀* (*Ifá* chants).  
He said, people of *Ìlawẹ̀*,  
I am carrying palm-oil (a peaceful individual).  
People of *Ìlawẹ̀*,  
I am carrying palm-oil (a peaceful individual).  
The palm-oil I am carrying (my ambition in life)  
Don't let it break (don't terminate my life ambition)  
The people of *Ìlawẹ̀*,  
I am carrying palm-oil (I have ambition in life).

The non-retaliation approach of *Ọ́rúnmìlà* made his stay in *Ìlawẹ̀* to be peaceful and successful. He knew very well that he could not succeed in an atmosphere of conflict, and that, no development in an atmosphere of conflict. Conflict terminates individuals, groups and nation's ambitions.

Conflict can erupt between one community and the other. This type of conflict is as a result of demand for independence, agitation, representation among other things in the national cake. For instance, there were Warri and Itsekiri/Ijaw communities in Delta State of Nigeria, the Ijaws fighting the Itsekiri for their own local government and separate headquarters. Sometimes, there may be conflicts devoid

of political intonation, but still inter-ethnic conflict. For instance, in the South Western State, in the Ifè/Modákéké, there has been a recurrence of ethnic Conflicts claiming lives and properties worth millions of United States dollars. In March, 2000, the then Governor of Òṣun State, where the two towns belongs invited them for peace talks as according to him “the use of force has not even resolved the dispute between the two neighbouring communities” (Adéyemò, 2000: 22). It is clear that the only lasting way to resolving conflicts in Africa is not by military, force, confrontation or neglect but rather by peace through negotiated settlement, persuasions, dialogue, mediation, adjudication and political approach among others as illustrated in the many philosophies that emanate from the *Ifá* practices.

## Conflict resolution

Conflict resolution has to do with settlement of conflict. There are different methods of conflict resolution such as mediation, reconciliation, negotiation and adjudication. The first step in resolving conflict is by inviting the two or more parties in conflict to peace meeting. This method applies to both pre and post conflict stages as entrenched in *Ifá*. This is normally initiated by a neutral party who should not take sides. In a situation that it involves a very large population, like a community in conflict with another, representatives of individuals of very high integrity and of high reputation are chosen from each parties. Adéyemò (2000: 123), thus, notes:

An enabling and conducive environment must be created to enable the main actors including the armed groups or rebels to participate under a neutral Third Party Mediator. It is only peaceful resolution of the African Conflicts and wars that can bring about desired peace and political stability needed for socio-economic developments, free movement of people and goods.

The Yorùbá precept of this form of conflict management is reported by Adéoyè (1971: 114) that:

*Ejédaá fún wọn láyè àtí ànfààní tí wọn tọrọ yí...  
Àwọn èdà isòrì yí dìdè nnwón sì kó ara wọn bó*

*sí ègbé kan níbí tí ohunkóhun kò gbé le yò wón l'ènu,  
 tí ẹnikẹni kò sì gbé le tí gbọ ọrọkọrọ tí wón bá sọ.  
 Dídé tí wón dé ibi tí wón gbé jẹ tẹ, wón kọ yan olórí kan  
 láàrin wón. kò sí ita, kò sí ijà tí wón fi panupò pé ẹni tí  
 yóò sasoju fún wón láti ibẹrẹ ọràn yí...*

Then, the creator gave them opportunities that they requested for this group stood up and gathered themselves together to a place where no one could hear their discussions. On getting to their meeting they selected representatives out of themselves. There was no any rift among them on who and who are to represent them on the matter...

Depending on the 'volatile' nature of the conflict, parties to the conflict may be invited together or to meet them separately in the first instance before both or all the parties are invited for adjudication. In case, the conflict demands representatives, they must be elderly people with experience of life. In many African communities, age is venerated because it is thought to be associated with wisdom. To the Yorùbá, *àgbà kẹ́ í wà lójá, kórí ọmọ́ titun wọ* meaning that, things must not go out of hand in the presence of an elder. Most of the time, the presence and the intervention of elders in conflict, lead to conflict resolution and transformation. This is as a result of pools or the wisdom of the elders in the Yorùbá society. The Yorùbá believes that the youth may be wealthier than the elders or occupy honourable and respectable positions than the elders, there is no way for the young ones to possess, acquire wisdom like the elders. This is natural endowment that is accorded to the elders most of the time. To the Yorùbá, *ọmọ́dé ọ̀ lẹ́ láṣọ bí àgbà, kó tún lákùsà bí àgbà* which means, a child cannot have cloth and rags as the elder. This is also realized as a form of power. The elders know the past history, the memorial heritage that is relevant in the adjudication of a case. To the Yorùbá people, *íríń s'ágbà ọgbón*, that is, experience is greater than wisdom. In many African societies such as the Yorùbá, experience is considered as the springboard of wisdom. One cannot be considered wise unless he or she has acquired some experience, the experience of which is normally associated with age. The elders employ the past relevant memory of a case to resolve a current

conflict. Şótundé (2009: 366) reports that “Elders are the Custodian of the people’s heritage” Elders advice has to be complied with. To the Yorùbá *òrò àgbà bí kò bá    l  n  r  , b   p   t  t         l  j   al  *, meaning that, words of elders will sooner or later come to pass. There is no way wrong judgment or wrong settlement of conflict can be delivered with the presence of the elders. In other words, there is rarely a report of miscarriage of justice with the presence of the elders in the Yor  b   society.

Language use is a vital instrument of conflict management. The representatives must have a command of the use of language to influence and carry people along. They must as well know what to say? When? How? And who to address? The Yor  b   people believe that *  r   n   y   obi n  n     p  , b    s   ni   r   n   i   y     f   jade n  n     p  *, which means, words brings out cola-nut from the pocket and words drays out sword from shelve. This is contained in *If  * corpus, reported by   lad   (1978: 17) that:

*K   m   fi k  nj  k  nj   jay  ,  
K   m   fi w  r   j  k  n id    
  r   t  a b   fi   agb  , k   m   fi   eb  n    
...  r  nm  l   n   k   w  w  j     r   t  t   t  t    
k   w  h  n   r  n s  n  n....*

We should not rushed in enjoying life,  
we should be cautious in handling sensitive matter.  
The word we should be taken with maturity and as elderly  
must not be rendered in anger....  r  nm  l   enjoined us to  
think deep on a matter seriously.

One should observe the effect of a matter before it  
materializes...

The political, economic, ethnic or religious representatives must faithfully represent the interest of their people.   r  nm  l   enjoined them to shy away from selfish interest, as this may lead to conflict. According to *Odu   g  nd   M  j  *, contained in Ab  mb  l   (1969: 126):

*...Eni t   soj  *

*Kí ó ʃe ojú dárádára.  
Èní tó ʃe èyìn,  
Kó ʃe èyìn kó ʃunwòṇṣunwòṇ...*

The representatives,  
should represent well.  
The delegates,  
should serve the interest of the people...

The *Ifá* corpus says that, by serving the interest of the people rather than the individual interest will curb the rate of conflict.

### **Conflict transformation**

By transformation, it means a complete change of structure. It is putting an end to something and paving new way for another. In the context of conflict, parties in the conflict may stop fighting and start the peace process. Transformation can be realized in partial or full forms. The transformation is also subject to ‘gradual’ or ‘sudden’ process. This is applicable to conflicts that have lasted for decades and even hundred years. To the Yorùbá people, *inú èniyàn jìn*, meaning that, human heart is too deep, cannot be comprehended. To them human beings sometime pretend or disguise as if all is well, but it is the opposite. The situation, the Yorùbá describes as *a fẹ̀jẹ̀ sínú tutó funfun jáde* meaning that, putting or hiding blood inside and spitting white saliva out. This is deception. This attitude is detrimental to conflict transformation. Any crises that falls within this context can be described as “forced transformation.” In some instances, this can take the form of gradual or partial transformation. In partial form of conflict transformation, the process of peace restoration, progress and development is slow. Example of this type of partial form of transformation is the Darfur Crisis in Sudan in Africa lasted for over thirty one years (1973-2005).

## Why conflict transformation?

The parties involved in conflict should have a flash back to the social, economic and political events that brought about various conflicts in the society, looking into the origins, development, management, strength, weakness, success and failures of the past conflicts. This largely derives from the thinking that without the past, there cannot be present and today determines tomorrow. To the Yorùbá people, *bí ọmọdé bá ṣubú a wo iwájú, bí àgbà bá ṣubú a wẹyìn wò* meaning that, if a child stumbled and fell down, S/he looks forward, but if an elderly person stumbles and fell down S/he looks back. On one hand, a child who is immature and who lacks in life experiences will never learn to use the present mistake as the input for future benefits. An elderly one on the other hand, looks back to see the mistake of the past so as not to fall prey of the same in future. To the Yorùbá people, *ọgbón ọdún yìí, èrè ni lóḍún tó n bọ* meaning this year wisdom is a gain for the next year. This is contained in *Oḍu Ọ́jún Ìrẹ̀tẹ̀*, contained in Sàlámì (2002: 917):

*...N tó bá ṣeni lẹ̀ẹ̀kan,  
kò tún gbọ̀dọ̀ ṣeni lẹ̀ẹ̀kejì mó...*

...whatever is a mistake made once,  
must not befall one the second time...

In conflict transformation, balance reconciliation, mediation or negotiation should be made between the parties in conflict. The end should be 'win-win' resolution. No parties should claim total victory and the other(s) blames. This can only happen in a situation whereby adjudication to conflict is made by the Courts of Law, which integrates the strict application of law or legal machineries into conflict transformation. There should be spirit of 'give and take' between the parties in conflict. Each of the parties should shift ground for each or one another, so as to create rooms or gap for peace. The concern should be on future. Efforts must be made to correct the mistakes of the past, in order to prevent the recurrence

of it in the future. Talking about conflict transformation generally, Akpenpuun (2006: 149-150) observes that:

Through the study of the totality of conflicts, they are able to gain insights and understanding of the importance of ideological perception human nature, moral values, material values, experiences, causes and effects in a conflict situation. The methods, strategies and logistics of the past are reviewed by linking the past to the present and predicting the future history enhances the continuity of the phenomenon of conflict. This is an important benefit of the historical heritage in the study of conflict. It is in the context of the historical past that certain changes becomes desirable and are effected by the parties to the conflict.

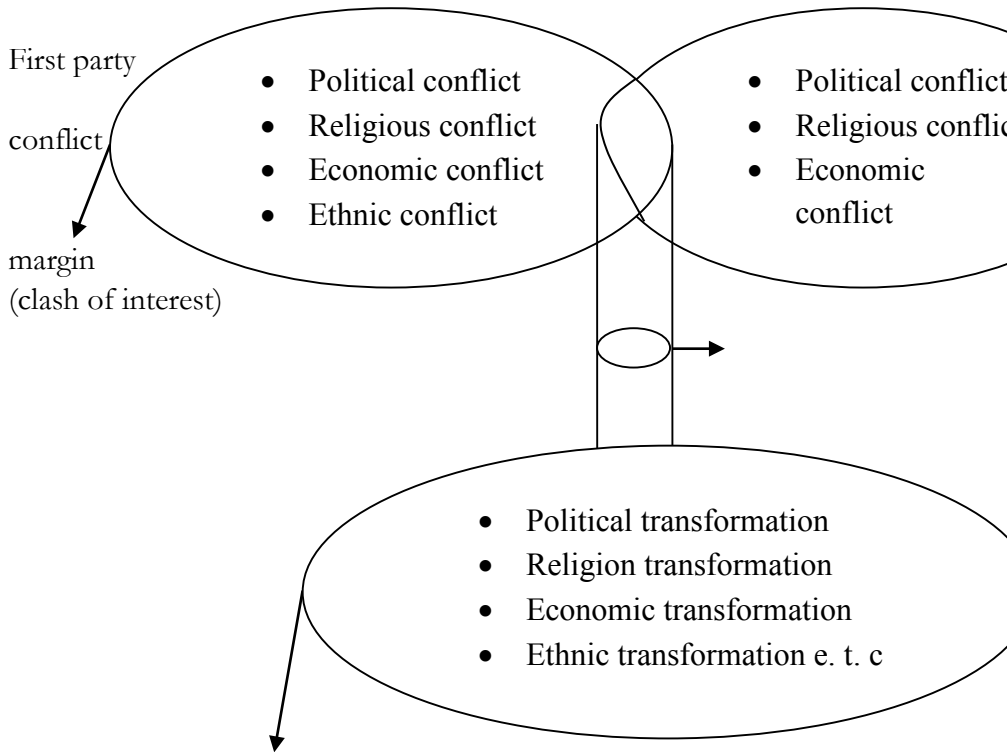
To Marxism, violent revolution is the means of bringing about change in the society. The Russian revolution of 1917 was violent and bloody. As Akpenpuun (2006: 150) tells us:

It became an outstanding reference point for all Marxists. At the time of decolonization in Asia, Africa and South America, there were many violent revolutions in which governments were overthrown through military coups. Since that time, the Marxist theory of violent revolutionary change has continued to influence a large number of conflicts in the world today.

On the contrary, to the Yorùbá people, *ohun a jẹ̀lẹ̀ mú kẹ̀ í bàjẹ̀, ohun a bá fagbára mú koko ni í lẹ̀*, meaning that, whatever is resolved peacefully succeeds, but whatever is forcefully resolved breeds hostility. Therefore the use of raw power should be discouraged in conflict resolution and transformation. Peace in conflict transformation must not be the peace of the graveyard type, which is peace not in the true sense, a deceptive peace. Conflict management and conflict transformation can be represented by the diagram I have provided below:



## A Chart Showing Conflict Management and Conflict Transformation



### Conflict transformation

The parties in conflict are represented by the first and second circles on top. However, it is possible for the parties in conflict to be more than two. Where the circles interwoven each other, is described as 'areas of conflict'. This is where there is conflict of interests that brings about conflict. Some of the interests are itemized inside the circle. The down circle that joined the two circles is represented by conflict transformation. The issue(s) in conflict is/are equally itemized.

## Conclusion

This chapter has discussed conflict management and transformation from the African traditional way, called the *Ifá* that is commonly used among the Yorùbá of Nigeria. The chapter discussed two forms of conflicts: pre-conflict and post-conflict. However, controls as a result of preventing conflict from occurring is described as pre-conflict type of conflict in this work; while controls after the manifestation of conflict had occurred is regarded as post-conflict type of conflict. The Yorùbá concept of *Omoluàbí* (good character) is seen as the bane of character control among the Yorùbá. It is observed from the discussion that most of the causes of conflict, especially in Africa are as a result of vices; which are against the spirit of *Omoluàbí*. Some of these vices, but not limited to these, examined in this chapter are retaliation, intolerance, anger, selfishness and greed among others. These vices are discussed along few out of many types of conflict that we may have, such as economic, political, ethnic or regional and religious crisis among others.

The chapter equally addressed the ways by which conflict can be resolved and conflict transformation achieved. Among the different methods discussed are negotiations, dialogue, Court of laws, mediation, and force among others. It is established that conflict transformation by negotiation and dialogue are best suited for a lasting solution to African conflicts. It is established that African methods of indigenous management to conflict and conflict transformation may be best suited to African conflicts and potentially can bring lasting solution to economic, ethnic, religious and political conflicts among others confronting the African continent in this century.

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### **Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:1-35) as a Model for Conflict Resolution: The Case of the Global Political Agreement in Zimbabwe**

*Tobias Marevesa*

#### **Introduction**

This chapter investigates efficacy of the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15: 1-35, hereafter Acts 15) as a possible model for conflict resolution in the Zimbabwean political landscape in the context of the Government of National Unity (GNU). The Jerusalem Council in Acts 15 was a first century conference which was convened when there was a conflict between Jewish and Gentile Christianity on the criteria of accepting Gentile Christians into Jewish Christianity. Even though the Jerusalem Council was a first century conference, this chapter argues that there are kerygmatic strategies of conflict-resolution that can be applied to the contemporary Zimbabwean political situation in the context of the Global Political Agreement (GPA). The conflict-resolution in Zimbabwe should be understood in terms of the signing of the Global Political Agreement among the main political parties which are the Movement for Democratic Change – Tsvangirai (hereafter MDC-T) led by Morgan Tsvangirai, the Movement for Democratic Change – Mutambara (hereafter MDC-M) led by Arthur Mutambara, and the Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (hereafter ZANU PF) led by Robert Mugabe. There are similarities which are there between the Jerusalem Council and the GPA in Zimbabwe. These similarities will show how the Jerusalem Council is a model for conflict-resolution in the Zimbabwean political landscape. The chapter argues that there are kerygmatic strategies of conflict-resolution of the first century church in Acts 15, which can be applied to the Zimbabwean political situation. Broadly, the chapter considers the factors that provoked conflict in the first century church of the Jerusalem Council,

including the problem of the Gentile Christians who were supposed to observe Mosaic Law and be circumcised as a prerequisite for their admission into the Christian Community and how these resonated with the challenges of political bifurcation along the ZANU-PF and MDCs polars that provoked conflict that would be resolved by the GPA in 21<sup>st</sup> century Zimbabwe. The process of conflict transformation in the first century early church of Acts 15 encompassed the following kerygmatic strategies: careful debate, respect for others, listening with an open mind, showing willingness to compromise, giving up one's own interests, and demonstrating willingness to allow others into one's safe haven. These principles tested against the political situation during the era of the GNU that sought to transform and reconcile the feuding political parties in Zimbabwe.

### **Conflict at the Jerusalem Council: Acts 15**

Conflict can be understood as disagreements or arguments over differing issues or values (Hunt, 2008: 1). This resonates with Resseguie (2005: 201), who defines conflict as a clash of ideas or points of view. On the other hand, conflict resolution can be defined as “the process of bringing warring parties together” (Hunt, 2008: 2). The outcome should be, to find possible ways to resolve a conflict or a crisis. Conflict is derived from a Greek word (*αγων*) which may mean hero or heroine or a protagonist. According to this line of thought, a plot usually involves an antagonism between a protagonist and an antagonist (Resseguie, 2006:201). According to Osborne (1991:158) biblical narratives (some of which will be examined in this chapter) are often characterised by conflict, for instance, God versus Satan, good versus evil, Peter versus Paul, or Jewish versus Gentile Christianity. Conflicts may be caused by either external or internal forces in an organisation or in a group of people. This is true with the situation on the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15, where conflict is witnessed among different people and groups caused by both external and internal factors. For instance, external conflict in the Jerusalem Council is seen where Paul was in conflict with the Jewish traditionalists over circumcision and the observance of Mosaic Law.

On the other hand, internal conflicts are within a character in a story or a group of characters. In the case of the Jerusalem Council, Peter understood the vision he received from God to imply preaching to the Gentiles. However, he was afraid to do so as a result of his fear of his fellow Jews.

The Jerusalem Council was a first century meeting, conference or synod which was convened in Jerusalem in AD 48/49 to address the conflict which started in Antioch over the demands by the Pharisees that Gentile Christians should be circumcised and observe the Mosaic Law before they were admitted into the Christian community (Schnabel, 2004:1007). This meeting is often called the “Apostolic Council” (Bock, 2007:486). The participants of the conference were: (a) the traditional Jewish Christians who demanded that Gentile Christians be circumcised and observe the Mosaic Law. (b) James, the brother of Jesus, who abandoned the circumcision of Gentile Christians, but proposed that they (Gentiles) should observe some sections of the commandments of the law. (c) Peter, who was a little bit liberal and did not want to impose either circumcision or the purity laws to the Gentile Christians. (d) Paul and Barnabas, who advocated for a law-free gospel for the Gentile Christians and were more liberal than Peter. (e) John who was one of the leaders of Jerusalem who agreed that Gentile Christians should share table fellowship together with Jewish Christians. According to Bock (2007:487); Schnabel (2004:1011); Bruce (1998:284), James was the leader of the Church in Jerusalem he took the mediating role during the deliberations of the council on conflict resolution. After a discussion of the key members and composition of the Jerusalem Council the chapter turns to an analysis of the elements that caused conflict in the Jerusalem Council story. The first to be considered is circumcision for the Gentiles as a condition for them to be admitted into the Christian community.

## **Circumcision**

In the story of the Jerusalem Council, there are different elements of conflict which threatened the unity of the Christian community. The major conflict was caused by the Jewish requirements for Gentile

admission into salvation. The problem was hinged on circumcision and observing Mosaic Law as necessary prerequisites for Gentile Christians to be accepted into Jewish Christianity. According to Story (2011: 39), this conflict originated in Antioch (Syria) where certain men (Jewish) who were from Judea taught that circumcision was a gateway to salvation for Gentile Christians. These men argued, “[u]nless you are circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved” (Acts 15: 1). The idea was that Gentiles were supposed to be circumcised before they could be accepted into the Christian community. This conflict was caused by the clash between Jewish and Gentile Christianity based on the values and norms of Jewish Christianity. The “practice of Moses” (τὸ ἐθεῖ τὸ Μωϋσέες) probably means “to the whole of the cultic law attributed to Moses” (Story, 2011:39). This phrase has been widely used by Luke, especially in Acts 6:14; 15:1; 16:21; 21:21; 25:16; 26:3; 28:17. The conflict was further exacerbated by another condition which was set by some Christian Pharisees in Jerusalem. This is evidenced in what Luke stated in Acts 15:5: “[t]he Gentiles must be circumcised and be required to obey the Law of Moses.” The implication of this statement was that the Gentiles could not live among the Jews without being proselytes.

It is important at this juncture to explain why circumcision was an issue during this period. The New Testament was written against the backdrop of multiculturalism. It was written when two cultures, that is, the Greek and Jewish cultures, coexisted tendentiously together. This is so because Palestine was colonised by the Greeks, hence, the Jews were Hellenised. There were points of conjunction as well as points of disjunction. However, circumcision was one area where there were clashes between Greeks and Jews. According to Glass (2004), at the time when the New Testament was written, Greeks were obsessed with beauty, and so the practice of circumcision compromised their sense of decency. For the Greeks, a person was considered naked in public games if the head of his penis was not covered; therefore, circumcision exposed the Gentiles when they participated in sporting activities. On the linguistic level, the Greek words for circumcision include *περιτομή* which may mean cutting around, and mutilation *κατατομή*, meaning cutting down



(Story, 2011: 40). These derogatory meanings illustrate why Gentile Christians were hostile to circumcision in the New Testament, as is particularly seen in Acts 15.

The element of conflict based on circumcision was further demanded by the Jewish hard-liners (Pharisees' party)'s position that the Torah expressed a deeper commitment to the stipulations of circumcision, as an indication of the covenant-relationship, following Abraham's example (Genesis 17: 9-14). According to Story (2010:40); Schwartz (1996:26), any male who did not comply with the stipulations of circumcision was deemed "cut off from the people of God." This was the case even if they were Jewish males, their immediate children, generations to come, strangers (Exodus 12: 44, 48), or procured slaves. The physical sign was so "everlasting" (Exodus 17: 13) that it affected Jewish identity and praxis. What the Jewish Christians demanded was uncompromising, and Gentiles had to comply. The concept of circumcision can be traced from the Jewish history of the Maccabean revolt (Garrison, 1997: 22). The Syrians wanted to exterminate Jewish traditions and customs including circumcision (1Maccabees 1: 48, 60-61). During the Maccabean revolt, Mattathias and his friends "circumcised by force the children that were not circumcised" (1Maccabees 2: 46). What is interesting is that, from the evidence of the four gospels, while Jesus was circumcised (Luke 2:21) he did not make any comment pertaining to circumcision.

The major source of conflict was the denial of salvation for the Gentile Christians who were not circumcised and were thus not keeping the Law of Moses. Consequently, they were not allowed to have table-fellowship with the Jews. The Jewish Christians saw salvation as excluding Gentiles. In the book of Acts, the verb "*to save*" (σωζειν), which is the base form for salvation, is used fourteen times, and the noun "*salvation*" (σωτηρια; σωτηριον), is used seven times. This is also supported by many words which belong to the salvific-word family (Story, 2010:4 1). The repetition of these words shows the importance of the salvation of the Gentiles. In other words, repetition emphasises the validity of accepting the Gentiles in the Christian community, as against the Jews' exclusive approach to the Gentiles. There are a number of salvific terms in Acts, and they relate

to a variety of benefits for the people of God. Salvation in the book of Acts constitutes an individual dependence on the Jesus-event, that is, Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection. This is reminiscent of what Twelftree (2009: 46) argues, that in addition to personal trust in the Jesus-event, salvation can be evident when there is a response of repentance, forgiveness of sins, and the Holy Spirit (Acts 2: 38-40, 11: 14-15). It is clear that Luke familiarises his community with the idea that salvation is a universal reality regardless of race, ethnicity, or religious affiliation (Acts 2: 21; 3: 11-12; 4: 11-12). This is against the background that Luke wanted to create prohibitive conflict stories to underscore universal salvation for all (Acts 10: 1-11: 18; 15: 1-35).

Before the Jerusalem Council, Peter's mission to the Gentiles is evidenced by his report on Cornelius. The report was received with joy by the apostles and brothers, "so then, God has granted even the Gentiles repentance unto life" (Acts 11: 18). Even if the apostles and brothers accepted Peter's report, the hard-liners (at the Jerusalem Council) could have been unaware of the event or undermined its validity, due to the fact that the Cornelius event happened long before the Jerusalem Council. Probably, the dispute was portrayed as an anomaly, an individual story, or an exception to the rule. Dunn (1996: 198) posits that, "[i]ts strength had yet to be tested." However, one would ask, what about the Gentile conversion narratives in Acts 13-14? These conversion stories show Paul's obligation to and enthusiasm for the Gentile mission. The Gentile territories received Paul and their jubilant reaction is described as follows:

"The forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you (Gentiles)... everyone who believes" (13: 38-39);

"We now turn to the Gentiles" (13: 46);

"I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the end of the earth" (13: 47);

"When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honoured the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed" (14: 1);

"A great number of Jews and Gentiles believed" (14: 1);

“How he (God) had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles” (Acts 14: 27);

The above is the evidence that shows that the door of faith was opened for the Gentiles. At the same time there were Jewish traditionalists (Pharisees) who held discriminatory views towards the Gentiles (Acts 15: 1, 5) and believed that they were not supposed to get salvation. This is also significant in that the conflict, based on circumcision, helped the unfolding of the story.

### **The Law of Moses**

The other element that precipitated the conflict that required resolution at the Jerusalem Council was over the observance of the Law of Moses (Acts, 15: 5; Story, 2010:4 2). The Pharisees at the Jerusalem Council did not only demand that the Gentiles adhere to circumcision, but they also required them to follow the stipulations of the Torah. This caused conflict between the Gentile and Jewish Christians, because it was very difficult to religiously follow the Law. Even the Jews themselves had found it difficult to follow the Torah to the latter's spirit. Barrett (2002: 722) rightly explains that, “[t]here would be no point in being circumcised and then neglecting to keep the Law.” In this context, the Law (νομος) indicates “the Law which Moses received from God” (Bauer, *et al*, 1979: 542). From a Jewish point of view, circumcision and adherence to the Mosaic Law could not be separated. Ignoring one or the other was akin to discarding either the Torah or “the Jewish way of life” (Dunn, 2006: 200). One can observe that the Pharisees could not even imagine a situation where they could trust in Jesus and then suspend their adherence to the Mosaic Law. Story (2010: 42) resonates well with Dunn (2006: 200) when he states that, “[f]rom the practical point of view, the Jewish mission would have failed if there was a clear abandonment of the Jewish way of life.” In the context of this conflict, the community and its leadership could have been convinced from the beginning of their mission. This disparity between the Gentile and Jewish Christians made it very difficult for them to mingle in the

same congregations. Therefore, Gentile adherence to the Mosaic Law was an ingredient of conflict in the Jerusalem Council story.

### **The issue of table-fellowship**

Another area of conflict between Gentiles and Jewish Christians was the issue of table-fellowship. Table-fellowship was about sharing a meal on the same table between Jews and Gentiles. Jews were not allowed by their religious belief system to share a table with non-Jews. From the Jerusalem Council perspective, table-fellowship could not be an issue, but a compromise, which was in three forms (Acts 15: 20, 29; 21: 25). However, Acts 15:20 ... show that it was a major problem. Esler (1994: 53) also indicates that table-fellowship was an issue that caused a rift between Gentile and Jewish Christians. This conflict was prevalent in Antioch and Galatia, where Peter was caught by fellow Jews sharing the same table with Gentiles, but withdrew upon their arrival. That is why Paul says in Galatians. 2: 21, “[i]f justification were through the law, then Christ died to no purpose”. This was a theological reality which emphasised the importance of the cross, but socially, it represented the expression of opening the door of salvation irrespective of such groupings as Eucharistic table-fellowship (Esler, 1994: 68). In this case, Paul maintained his position on sharing of table-fellowship even if this resulted in conflict. Esler (1987: 68) notes that, in Antioch, Peter entered into table-fellowship with Gentiles. The orthodox Jews were surprised when Peter withdrew from the table which he was sharing with Gentiles when fellow Jews came. When Paul saw this happening, he rebuked Peter. An analysis of this incident shows that Peter had understood the vision he had seen from God, commanding him to present the gospel to the Gentiles as well, but that it was difficult for him to convince other Jewish Christians.

The conflict on table-fellowship was brought to the Jerusalem Council in a similar way as circumcision (v.1) and the Law (v.5) (Story, 2010: 42). Esler (1987: 37) claims that the narrator in Acts brought to the surface two important things throughout Acts: (1), the religious nature of Cornelius before he was converted to Christianity; and (2), the scenario that Peter, a Jew, shared table-fellowship with

Gentiles. In the story of Cornelius, the first criticism from the Jewish apostles and brothers relates to the problem of circumcision and table-fellowship: “the circumcised believers criticized him thus, ‘You went into the house of uncircumcised men and ate with them’” (Acts 11: 2). This meant that Peter was being accused by fellow Jews of sharing meals and mixing with the Gentiles.

### **Wording that articulates conflict in the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15)**

The author of the Jerusalem Council story used a variety of expressions, which express conflict, employing different nouns and verbs. Story (2010: 42) suggests that *dissension* (στάσις), for instance, is a word which articulates conflict in the sense that when such a word is used, the situation may be characterised by disagreements, discord, opposition and rebellion. Therefore, the way the word is used to describe a situation sets the tone of the type of conflict. Danker and Gingrich, (1983: 185) suggested a number of words with a similar meaning, including *uprising, riot, revolt, rebellion, strife, discord, and dispute*. An analysis of these words reveals that the implied author’s use of words in his narrative shows conflict and strife in the Jerusalem Council story. The other expression which articulates conflict is *sharp debate* (ζητήσις). In the *Shorter Lexicon of the Greek New Testament* (Danker and Gingrich, 1983: 185) there are many different words which point to conflict, such as *investigation, controversial question, controversy, discussion and debate*. The phrase *sharp debate* has been used by the implied author in (Acts 15: 2, 7; 25:20) to imply sharp dispute. There are also expressions such as “*this matter/question*” (ὁ λόγος οὗτος 15: 6) and “*much dispute*” (πολλή ζητήσις 15: 7). An examination of the words which were used by the narrator in his report shows that there was a deep-seated conflict at the Council of Jerusalem. If these words are taken together, it is clear that the Jewish traditionalists (Pharisees’ party) caused real turmoil at the Jerusalem Council. As has been shown above, the words show a situation which was characterized by controversial discussions between the Jewish and Gentile Christians over circumcision and the Law of Moses. In fact, the debate was heated and emotional, and the language used here shows an intense verbal exchange with the Jewish traditionalists. The narrator indicates

a deep-rooted conflict, and expresses a severe lack of agreement. The difference in opinion ran deep (Bock, 2007: 495).

The implied author created the narrator, who expresses the demands by Jewish traditionalists as a “yoke (ζυγός) that neither we nor our fathers have been able to obey” (Acts 15: 10). The same complaint is also found in v. 28 as a “burden” (βάρος) (De Villiers, 2013: 146; Barrett, 2002: 719; Haenchen, 1987: 429). According to De Villiers, the Jerusalem church did not want to “burden” the Gentiles with the requirements of Jewish Christianity, in order for them to be accepted into the Christian community. These expressions reflect the time and environment in which Acts was written. It can also be argued that the harsh sense of “yoke” and “burden” are used in a similar way as in Matthew 11: 28-30; 23: 4. The narrator goes on to accuse the Jewish Christians of “challenging God” (“why are you challenging God?” τί πειράζετε τὸν θεόν; (Acts 15: 10). The expression “to challenge” was used in Matthew 4: 7 and Luke 4: 12. Using the term “challenge” could imply a situation in which the Jews were testing or arguing with God. In addition, the narrator, through James’ speech, understands that the prohibitive Law is a practice of “harassment” (παρενοχλεῖ). Johnson (1992: 226) translated this word “harassment” as “to cause trouble, difficulty, and annoy.” The story-teller uses two verbs which show the outcome of the Jewish traditionalist’s demands; that is, “they disturbed” (ἐτάραζαν) and “you were “troubling (ἀνασκευάζοντες) your minds by what they said” (Acts, 15: 24; Story, 2010: 43). The story goes on by repeating the verb, “to become silent” (σιγᾶν [Acts 15:12-13]) which differs with the preceding sharp conflict. From the way this narrative is constructed, the Jewish traditionalists’ debate is not revealed, with the exception of the minimal references in Acts 15: 1, 5. It is possible that there were arguments and counter arguments which might not have been recorded. The narrator knew how to resolve the conflict, obviously by the crafting of the decree which was relayed to different congregations in the diaspora.

## **Threat to the unity of the Christian Community**

The last thing to consider as an element that causes dissent is the atmosphere that threatened the unity of the Christian community and its leadership at the time. The narrator of Acts gives a variety of summaries in the book which are characteristic of a peaceful outlook of unity within the Christian community (cf. 2: 42-47; 4: 32-35; 5: 12-14; 16: 5). Tyson (2008: 109) comments that, “[f]or Luke, authentic Christianity is marked by peace and concord among the leaders and members.” This kind of unity is witnessed in Acts 14: 26-28. However, Luke here is practical. This peaceful picture of the community is often threatened by the dissent between the two main Christian communities, Jerusalem and Antioch. Story (2010: 43) notes that, as far as unity is concerned, the conflict at the Jerusalem Council threatened to separate apostolic leaders of the two main Christian communities. It was going to be difficult for both to relate to each other, given the contrast between Paul and Barnabas’ Law-free Christianity and a more conservative group of apostles in Jerusalem. Further, the division between the mother church in Jerusalem and the daughter church in Antioch implies that there could be two different headquarters with completely different missions: that is, one for Jewish Christians and the other for Gentile Christians. The question can therefore be asked, could they work together as Christians, regardless of them being Jewish or Gentile? If so, what are the significant thoughts? Some principles of conflict-resolution (reconciliation) from Acts 15 which De Villiers (2013: 145) suggests are of use in the following section. These include, careful debate, showing respect for others, listening with an open mind, having the willingness to compromise, and giving up one’s interest.

## **The Global Political Agreement in Zimbabwe: An overview.**

ZANU was formed in 1960 after it parted ways with the Zimbabwe African People’s Union (ZAPU) which was led by Joshua Nkomo. Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole was the first president of ZANU, and was replaced by Robert Mugabe in 1975 (Chung, 2007:115).

The two MDC formations are the offshoot of the MDC, which Meredith, (2002:70) states was formed in September 1999 as a brain child of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (hereafter ZCTU) and civic movements, with the aim of dislodging ZANU PF's monopoly in ruling Zimbabwe. The MDC split because they could not agree on whether to participate or not in Senatorial elections of 2005. However, some critics such as Kriger (2012: 11); and Raftopoulos (2010: 705), claim that the issue of the senatorial election was a symptom of a deeper problem, as there was a power struggle among the party leaders. Tsvangirai was left with a bigger party while Gibson Sibanda, who was Tsvangirai's deputy, led the breakaway and led a smaller party for a short time. The smaller party, after the passing on of Gibson Sibanda, invited Arthur Mutambara, who was working outside the country, to come back to Zimbabwe and lead it. The two MDC formations had to suffix the names of their presidents to the names of their parties in order not to confuse the voters, hence the names Movement for Democratic Change – Tsvangirai (MDC–T) and Movement for Democratic Change – (MDC–M) (Tatira and Marevesa, 2011: 187). It is the purpose of this section to apply the first century kerygmatic principles of conflict-resolution to the Zimbabwean political landscape. Kerygmatic principles are doctrines that are to do with proclamation or preaching in the sense of the nature and content of early Christian faith (Muddiman, 1990: 373).

The background to the problems of Zimbabwe, which resulted in the “Zimbabwe Crisis” dates back to 1980. Zimbabwe's post-colonial period was characterized by an economic boom and reconciliation in the early 1980s, (Raftopoulos, 2007:79). However, the political problem of *gukurahundi* resulted in the political instability in the Matabeleland and Midlands regions from 1982 to 1988. The economic boom of the immediate post-independence period did not last long. Zimbabwe's economy experienced mixed fortunes throughout the 1980s, as it went through the negative effects of drought, weakening terms of trade and high interest rates and oil prices, (Bond, 2003: 163). All this impacted negatively on the government's capacity to finance its programmes. Muzondidya (2009: 40) argues that the International Monetary Fund and World Bank mounted pressure on the Zimbabwean government to abandon



some of its social policies between 1983 and 1984. These policies were the fulfilment of the pre-independence promises to the electorate, but were detrimental to the economic development of the country. There was free education and health for all. There are several factors that led to the crisis in Zimbabwe from 1980 to 2008. Among them are the land question, the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (hereafter ESAP), the revolt of the war veterans, food riots, post-independence wars, election violence, sanctions, and rejection of the adoption of the 'yes' in the referendum of 2000 (Raftopoulos, 2009: 1-30). These said factors led to the political tensions among the political parties in Zimbabwe.

### **The Jerusalem Council as a model of the Global Political Agreement in Zimbabwe**

While the Jerusalem Council (JC) and the Global Political Agreement (GPA) are situated in different times and geographical locations, they share a lot of kerygmatic principles. The JC is found in the first century early church of Acts 15, which exhibited conflict as the early church was in its infancy. When Gentile Christianity was sprouting from Jewish Christianity, it posed a lot of conflicts because of different ideologies and belief systems. This resulted in the execution of Stephen because he had challenged the fundamental beliefs of Jewish Christianity such as the importance of the Mosaic Law, the holiness of the Temple, and the significance of the Jerusalem (Acts 7:1ff). The conflict reached its climax in Antioch of Syria (Acts 14) where there was a misunderstanding between Paul and Peter on the criterion of accepting the Gentile Christians into the Christian community. This necessitated the convening of the Jerusalem Council in order to resolve the conflict.

In a similar way, the GPA was a document which was signed among the three main political parties in Zimbabwe, which are ZANU PF led by Robert Mugabe, MDC-T led by Morgan Tsvangirai, and MDC-M led by Arthur Mutambara. The GPA was signed because there was a political and economic crisis in Zimbabwe that needed a political solution. The GPA was meant to resolve political and economic problems which bedevilled the country before

and after 2008 general elections. These 2008 harmonised elections could not produce a decisive winner on the presidential post. As such, a run-off election was inevitable. The subsequent presidential run-off election was marred by various manifestations of open violence, which forced the MDC-T candidate and leader, Morgan Tsvangirai, to pull out of the race. Mugabe's sole candidature led to his winning of the ballot, but he was not recognized by the international community generating a crisis of legitimacy for his re-election (Raftopoulos, 2009). This political tension among the three parties resulted in the signing of the GPA as a way of solving the deep-rooted political conflict that had caused untold suffering to the people of Zimbabwe.

Just like the situation which was in the JC, the political parties that signed the GPA were composed of people who had diverse and different political ideologies. The JC and the GPA are similar in that the Jews and Gentiles had different ideologies on how they perceived Christianity, whereas, the MDC formations and ZANU PF were having different political and economic ideologies. The JC was a religious council which was set to resolve the problem of the inclusion of the Gentiles into Jewish Christianity. However, in the end, both the JC and the GPA resolved the conflict through careful debates, respect for others, listening with an open mind, having willingness to compromise, and giving up one's best interests.

In the JC, after Peter's judgment, the conference delegates agreed to formulate a legal document that would be used by both Jewish and Gentile Christians as their code of conduct. This document was the Apostolic decree, circulated to the Gentile communities by Paul, Barnabas and others (Acts, 15:20). This is also reminiscent with what transpired at the GPA. After a series of negotiations and "talks" among the political parties under the facilitation of a South African mediator in the form of the South African President, Thabo Mbeki, a document was also produced by the negotiating team, which governed the workability of all political parties in the inclusive government. The document was named the Global Political Agreement. In this case, we therefore see the JC as a prototype of the GPA.

In assessing the emergence of both the JC and GPA, one would say that they came into existence as firefighting measures (Tatira and Marevesa, 2011:190). Jewish and Gentile Christianity were supposed to resolve their conflict and function together in order that the early Church would move forward in propagating the gospel. There was also an urgent need for both the MDC formations and ZANU PF to work together in the Government of National Unity (GNU) so that the country could move forward. In both cases of the JC and the GPA, they did not resolve the conflicts in a permanent way. This is evidenced by the persistent mudslinging situations which took place in the operations of the GNU in its five-year span, on the one hand, and the early church, on the other hand. Pertaining to the GPA, the outstanding issues included, the question of the appointment of permanent secretaries, the Reserve Bank Governor, the Attorney General, the appointment and swearing-in of Roy Barnett, among other concerns. In the JC, the purported resolutions that were made at the council remained problematic as instanced by the question of food and dietary laws (1 Corinthians 8). One would thus be motivated to ask the profound question: were these two events, that is, the JC and the GPA, marriages of convenience?

An analysis of the two scenarios, that is, the JC and the GPA, is that both were borne out of conflict situations. The JC was necessitated by the conflict which was there between Jewish and Gentile Christians on how Gentile Christians should be admitted into the Christian community. The GPA also came as a result of an attempt to resolve conflict among the three main political parties in Zimbabwe namely, ZANU PF and MDC formations.

Jewish Christianity, on its own, had a long history where it enjoyed its monopoly as a religious belief of the Jews. When Gentile Christians were to be included in Jewish Christianity, it seemed to them (Jews) as an act of turning the tables of religion upside down. In a similar way, ZANU PF enjoyed being in power since 1980 such that the MDC formations which were fairly recent, appeared as a great challenge to the status quo. Put differently, in the eyes of ZANU PF, the inclusion of MDC parties in the GNU was interpreted as turning the tables of the postcolonial Zimbabwean politics upside down. At another level, a closer look on Gentile

Christianity shows that it was an offshoot of Jewish Christianity just as ZANU PF party was the fountain from which the two MDC formations emerged.

The situations that are found both in the JC and the GPA were threatening the peace and unity of their communities. In the JC, as understood by Luke, genuine Christianity was characterized by peace and concord among the leaders and members (Tyson, 2008: 109). This peaceful depiction of the community was threatened by the dissent and tensions between the two main Christian communities, Jerusalem and Antioch. The conflict at the Jerusalem Council threatened to separate apostolic leaders of the two main Christian communities (Story, 2010:43). In the case of the GPA, the political conflict that was among the three main political parties in Zimbabwe was threatening peace and security within the region and beyond. The countries in the SADC region were divided over the political conflict in Zimbabwe. The countries that were still led by former liberation movements were backing ZANU PF, whilst countries like Botswana and most countries that were ruled by non-liberation movements such as Zambia were supporting the MDC-T in the process of negotiations. It was therefore difficult for the warring parties to relate to each other, given the contrast between the MDC formations and ZANU PF. This is also similar with the scenario in the JC where relations were bitter between Paul and Barnabas' law-free Christianity and a more conservative group of apostles in Jerusalem.

### **Application of the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15) to the GPA in Zimbabwe**

This section focuses on the application of the Jerusalem Council to the GPA in Zimbabwe. In general, religion and politics are difficult entities to separate, pertaining to both the biblical narratives and the Zimbabwean situation. Indeed, the political situation in Zimbabwe in the context of the GPA is reminiscent of what took place at the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15). Some principles of conflict-resolution from Acts 15, which De Villiers (2013: 145) identified are useful in this section. These principles include, careful debate, respect for others, listening with an open mind, having a willingness to

compromise, and giving up one's best interests. However, these guiding principles from the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15 will not be applied to the Zimbabwe situation one by one, but they will be applied under two sub-headings of mediation and compromise in the process of resolving political conflict.

## **Mediation**

Mediation is “the process through which agreements are reached with the aid of a neutral third party or helper” (Gunduza and Namusi, 2004: 67). Hamauswa and Chinyere (2015:2); Spoelstra and Pienaar (1996: 3); Prutt and Cornevale (1993: 166) share the same sentiment as Gunduza and Namusi on the definition of mediation. Often, conflict between two groups of people or two people may not work towards resolution and might require mediation. The primary objective of negotiation in the process of conflict-resolution is to engage in a dialogue where a solution to a conflict is reached. Mediation is normally taken on board where the parties involved in conflict have made an attempt to negotiate, but failed to reach a consensus. Forms of mediation can exist in a variety of settings which could be interpersonal, inter-state, and intra-state. In the situation in Zimbabwe, the conflict was intra-state, where three political parties were in conflict in a struggle to capture and maintain state power. The author of Acts was able to identify a conflict which was in the process of escalating and had set up a mediation process. There was a need for a third party. According to Witherington (1998: 455), the conflict started in Antioch of Syria over the conditions which were supposed to be followed when accepting the Gentile Christians into the Christian community. A delegation which comprised Paul and Barnabas was sent from Antioch to Jerusalem for a conference, for the purpose of mediation.

In a similar way, the mediation took place over the political tensions in Zimbabwe, was based on several allegations which were raised against the ruling ZANU PF party by the opposition parties in Zimbabwe. The crisis which forced SADC to appoint South Africa to mediate in the negotiations among the political parties in Zimbabwe between 2007 and 2008 were an attempt to snatch state

power, the election crisis, and failure to democratise (Hamauswa and Chinyere, 2015:3). In a bid to make some economic and political reforms, the ZANU PF government adopted the policies discussed above such as ESAP, the post-independence wars, and the payment of gratuities to war veterans, among others. The conflict in Zimbabwe worsened in 2007, when the opposition leaders, which include Morgan Tsvangirai and Lovemore Madhuku, were beaten and then detained by the police. In response, the UN, AU, and European Union mounted pressure on SADC to deal with the Zimbabwean conflict. According to Maisiri (2013) and Mhandara *et al* (2013), SADC countries got involved and assigned South Africa to facilitate negotiations among the political parties in Zimbabwe at an extraordinary summit of the heads of state and government in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, on 27 March, 2009. The former South African President Thabo Mbeki's mandate was to bring the warring parties to the negotiating table, "addressing socio-economic challenges, the creation of conditions for a credible harmonised election in 2008 as well as assisting Zimbabwe's re-engagement with the international community" (Maisiri, 2013). Mhandara *et al* (2013: 13) rightly contend that the South African facilitated negotiations between ZANU PF and the two MDC formations resulted in the relatively credible harmonised elections in March 2008.

Regrettably, the March 2008 harmonised elections did not produce an outright presidential winner, a scenario which plunged back the whole country into another deep political crisis, a situation which was similar to the 2000 post-referendum era when the opposition had won against ZANU PF. For a candidate to be an outright winner, the electoral laws required a candidate to garner 50% plus one vote of the total votes cast. In this situation, by the fact that there was no outright winner, there was the need for the run-off of the presidential election. Just as in the case of the referendum, ZANU PF unleashed a wave of violence against the opposition supporters. In this regard, Maisiri (2013) rightly argues that "[t]he credible electoral environment prevalent in March was seen as threatening to the party's continued hold on power, triggering the political violence and intimidation towards the presidential run-off election of June 2008." In the same vein, the Zimbabwe Electoral Support Network

(ZESN) (2008) is of the view that the presidential run-off election was marred by intimidation and repression.

The situation in Zimbabwe became so bad that the international community had to intervene through the SADC (Hamauswa and Chinyere, 2015:6; Mhandara *et al.* 2013 14; Maisiri, 2013). The former South African President Mbeki was again given the task of mediating and bringing the warring political parties together for the second time at the Egypt Summit in June 2008. However, Mbeki's mandate in the second phase of mediation was different. The focus this time in the second phase was to facilitate the formation of an inclusive government composed of the then three political parties, namely ZANU PF and the two MDC formations. The negotiation period in the second phase stretched from April 2008 to February 2009, when the Government of National Unity (GNU) was born. The extent of hostility among the three political parties meant that the mediation process had to be extended from February 2009 to July 2013, because the focus now was the on implementation of the provisions of the GPA. The two successive South African mediators (former South African President Mbeki and the incumbent president Zuma) dealt with the real challenges and complexities of the Zimbabwean crisis throughout the phases of mediation, from the pre-2008 election to the post 2008 harmonised election and ultimately the implementation of the GPA establishment.

The mediation process was not without its challenges. Firstly, President Mugabe is viewed as a hero in Africa. In this regard, any negotiation that was aimed at removing him from power would not work (Maisiri, 2013). As Maisiri further notes, President Mugabe's influence is so strong that any negotiations that are presided over by a SADC member can never be even or fair. Secondly, there is solidarity within the liberation movements within the SADC region. According to Hamauswa and Chinyere (2015:8), these liberation movements have a relationship that dates back to the colonial period and ultimately to the formation of the SADC. In light of this, it is unthinkable to imagine that there could be a meaningful political outcome if one of these parties is involved in the mediation. The other challenge was the ideological differences between ZANU PF and the two MDC formations. ZANU PF perceived the MDC as a

puppet political party that was serving the interest of its Western (Britain, USA and the EU) allies, and thus that that meant re-colonisation and the reversal of the gains of independence. President Mugabe is on record in saying that ‘Zimbabwe will never be a colony again,’ implying that if the MDC ruled the country, it would be re-colonised by its Western allies; whilst the MDC viewed ZANU PF as perpetrators of human rights abuses. This resulted in political polarisation and impasse among the political parties, and it was difficult for the mediator to control the stage. Even though there were mediation complexities and challenges in the process of conflict-resolution, however, there was good progress in bringing the warring parties together by forming a government of national unity, resulting in the improvement of the economy of the country. In addition, of importance is the fact that the principle of mediation was successfully implemented during the crisis in Zimbabwe’s political landscape just as it was also used in the early church of Acts 15.

### **Decision with compromise**

The cooperate quest for the divine will resulted in the compromised agreement that made it possible for Gentile Christians to be part of the Christian community. According to Musingafi, *et al.* (2011: 41) compromise “is an intermediate position on both assertiveness and cooperation often referred to as ‘splitting the difference,’ seeking a quick, middle-ground position.” In the process of compromise, each party that is involved in a conflict should be prepared to meet the other party half way towards conflict resolution. Compromise can be possible if both parties in a conflict realize that it is better to resolve the conflict than for one person to ‘win.’ If the contending parties fail to make a decision without succumbing to compromise, the verdict or outcome would obviously be negative. According to Story (2011:54) “[i]ndecision would lead to confusion and divisiveness; there is no compromise, the backlash from the Jewish Christians might be substantial.” If there was an unexpected rejection of the compromise, it would imply that there could be further complication and an amplified tension.



In the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15, the principle of compromise was important in resolving the conflict that existed between the Jewish and Gentile Christians. In the case of the Zimbabwean political situation, although there were differences in political ideology among the political parties, there was no party which enjoyed any benefit in the situation, which translates to mean that there was a real need to have the above-mentioned principles applied: a careful debate, respect for others, listening with an open mind, the willingness to compromise, and the giving up of one's interest. As a result of the political tensions during the first phase of the negotiations, that is, during the pre-2008 harmonised elections, any political party which was not prepared to compromise could have ended up in political oblivion.

ZANU PF and the MDC were philosophically opposed to each other in a number of ways. According to Hamauswa and Chinyere (2015:8), “[t]hese ideologies are, however, not unique to Zimbabwe, but provide a microcosmic representation of the international political and economic community.” It was not easy to bring these philosophically diverse political parties together at the negotiating table. This is so because the “[n]ationalisation of the country's natural economic resources and protectionist economic policies of ZANU PF [were tangentially] different from what the MDC [stood] for, liberation and international commercial competition” (Maisiri, 2013).

Related to the above was the fear of retaliation on the part of the ZANU PF party. The ZANU PF party was not comfortable that the MDC might take over power, especially given some of the political pronouncements by the MDC regarding the future of ZANU PF members after the demise of their party. ZANU PF supporters were not sure of their future political life. There was fear within the ZANU PF camp that they would be arrested and dragged to the international criminal court. As a result, ZANU PF was not prepared to compromise during the negotiations. For the MDC, the negotiations were an opportunity to take over power from ZANU PF. Although there were varying degrees of ideological differences among the three main political parties, they subsequently compromised, formed the government of national unity, and implemented the provisions of the GPA. Therefore, the mediation team and the negotiators had clearly

carefully debated, respected each other's views, listened with an open mind, compromised, and given up their own interest in the process of mediation and negotiations, resulting in relative conflict-resolution. With these principles from the early church of Acts 15, it has been discovered that they were useful in resolving conflict when applied to the political situation in Zimbabwe in the context of the GPA.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has established that in any conflict there is a need to bring warring parties to the negotiating table, leading them to come up with a common vision and objectives. This was seen in the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15 where there was conflict between the Jewish traditionalists (Pharisees) and Gentile Christians on the conditions in which the Gentiles should be accepted into the Christian community. The Jewish traditionalists insisted that Gentiles should only be admitted if they became Jews first. In other words, Gentiles were supposed to be circumcised and observe the Mosaic Law. The conflict was resolved through mediation, negotiation and compromise, through the facilitation of the Jerusalem Church. This biblical model of conflict-resolution was applied to the Zimbabwean political landscape in the context of the GPA. In the process of negotiation in Zimbabwe, there were three phases: the pre-2008 election, the disputed presidential election run-off, and the implementation of the provisions of the GPA. The major problem was that ZANU PF resorted to acts of electoral violence in the run up of the presidential run-off election. There were near-insurmountable challenges following the formation of the government of national unity, with ZANU PF displaying a lack of commitment to the full implementation the provisions of the GPA.

However, these were overcome through compromise in the negotiation period. The biblical principles of conflict-resolution of the early Church of Acts 15 overlapped with the Zimbabwean political situation of conflict-resolution in light of the GPA.

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### Ubuntu/Unhu as Communal Love: Critical Reflections on the Sociology of Ubuntu and Communal Life in sub-Saharan Africa

*Munyaradzi Mawere & Gertjan van Stam*

#### Introduction

*“Never stop thinking ahead of time [...] for a mind awake never stops thinking” (Munyaradzi Mawere 2016).*

Many philosophical and anthropological concepts continue nagging our minds, prompting us to keep on thinking even more critically and ahead of our times, so long we are alive and awake. The concept of Ubuntu/Unhu is one of them: it has become so topical, yet more elusive and tantalising a concept.

Africa, especially in the countryside of its sub-Saharan region, is richly endowed with the charitable gift of Ubuntu/Unhu (Nyamnjoh 2015a; Mawere and Mubaya 2016). Nevertheless, designating the meaning of the term ‘Ubuntu’ with all the expected precision is a tantalising and problematic activity. The term vigorously resists the exercises to describe it, most particularly when interpreted, given a hegemonic, foreign development and civilisation discourse prevailing in sub-Saharan region. Also, as with all definitions, what Ubuntu entails is context dependent. Its shadings and presence depend on the geographical, historical, linguistic and other components that weave together the texture and matrix of societies. Further, the interpretation of Ubuntu – whether it is a moral quality or a phenomenon – depends on one’s perception of the nature of personhood (Gade 2012; van Stam 2014). These variances in cognisance influence the considerations regarding the interaction of Ubuntu within particular circumstances, both in time and place. As previously proposed by van Stam (2014: 38), “without Ubuntu there is no peace in Africa.” In this chapter, we push this argument further

noting that with the absence of Ubuntu in Africa, there will be war of everyone against everyone, where everyone will be at war with each other. As such, in the present chapter we are interested in pushing how Ubuntu, in general, contributes to transformation, peace and unity of purpose in the presence of violence and conflict-torn situation. In this view, we seek to designate concepts in Ubuntu that are of a transcendental or metaphysical nature without downplaying its epistemological underpinnings. Through an epistemological, hermeneutical and ethnographic review of observed cultural particularities and conceptualisations of civilisations, this chapter contributes towards the dialogue on how to mediate politicking, conflict and violence. It does so by providing an undergirding for the proposal to strive for Ubuntu in a conflict management and transformation process that facilitates perpetual peace, unity and positive change in the 21<sup>st</sup> century Africa. As sub-Saharan cultures are grounded within Ubuntu, we would like to contribute to furthering its understanding and appreciation concerning culture and civilisation, explicitly grounding Ubuntu in the context of religion, language, tradition and society.

In an effort to explore avenues to unearth approaches to counter nefarious and evil acts in Africa, this chapter explores pathways from a contextual understanding of the crystallisation of African philosophy in Ubuntu. Sensitised by the biblical adage that love “always protects, always trusts, always hopes [and] always perseveres” (1 Corinthians 13:7), we explore the union of Ubuntu and love. This exploration constitutes an effort to pinpoint an embedded African mechanism that could furnish our passion for transformation, peace and unity in Africa. The chapter emerges from long-term, in situ trans-disciplinary, reflective ethnographic research and life experiences in sub-Saharan Africa and further afield, augmented by literature research. In this whole endeavour, we advance the important argument that Ubuntu can be well understood as a metaphor of Communal Love. Such an understanding provides a strong and contextually sound basis for peace and reconciliation.



## Seeking propitious knowledge

Context matters for whatever happens to take place in its ambience. Therefore, the phenomenon like the manifestations addressed in this volume must be studied within the social location of their occurrence. Relevant research must utilise contextually appropriate methodologies and epistemologies, embedded in compatible world-views and philosophies, cognisant of local rights and dignity (Mawere & van Stam 2015). African cultures, although diverse and volatile, harbour situated systems of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms facilitating communications and providing for the local basis to develop and perpetuate useful knowledge. Such embedded (and embodied) knowledge customarily includes the metaphysical aspects of African cultures. In this chapter, we investigate from a multi-disciplinary outlook the values of (social) cohesion and unity, integrating contributions from any source of knowledge, including those from practitioners and religion (Du Plessis *et al.* 2013).

It appears that the realisation of the potency of (ever-changing) groupings of people regarding the objective and subjective embodiments of their philosophies prompted Huntington (1993), consciously or otherwise, to rethink civilisation in view of world cultures. In his seminal paper: *Clash of civilisations*, Huntington predicted that global fault lines – designating where most violence and conflict would take place – would not be defined by the labels ‘developed’ or ‘developing nations,’ but would be determined by the differences of cultures between societies. In his view, these cultural differences would be interpreted and defined along long term enshrined society patterns defined by religions, language, and cultural values and traditions.

The questions that boggle us today prompting the writing of this chapter are: To what extent does what Huntington predicted can be recognised in the endemic presence of violence in Africa, especially sub-Saharan Africa? And, does Ubuntu as a guiding principle of conduct in most if not all the sub-Saharan societies, provide us with a platform for transformation, peace and unity in Africa?

## What Ubuntu/Unhu is and is not

As already been alluded to, describing Ubuntu with precision is a tricky activity. Although *Ubuntu* has been fundamentally important to the African thought for a long time now, only a relatively small number of scholars – often from outside the continent – have contributed to its theorisation and indispensable practical deployment in real life. What is best recorded about Ubuntu from African soil are descriptions – especially in the form of narratives – other than pinned down definitions and theorisation of the term. From this ambiguous situation, we deduce that the study of attributes is deficient to inform a comprehensive definition and the content of the transcendent character of Ubuntu. While most scholars agree that the outcomes of Ubuntu are moralistic in nature – characterising situations and attitudes associated with good and bad behaviour – there is neither broad consensus on the boundaries of its definition nor consensus on its reach and application. Nevertheless, it is clear that Ubuntu associates with a whole range of positive attitudes that exercise respect for human life and passion for community, helpfulness, conviviality, sharing, caring, trust and unselfishness. Ubuntu appears to boil down to notions that prescribe how one engages in the ‘right manner’ in connection with other people.

Throughout sub-Saharan Africa, Ubuntu is grounded in culture and indigenous epistemology. As Mawere and Mubaya (2016) rightly capture in their *African philosophy and thought systems...*, although Ubuntu’s nomenclature can vary – *Ubuntu* in Nguni languages (Xhosa/Zulu/Ndebele), *uMunthu* in Chichewa, *Botho* in Tswana, *Vumunhu* in Changani, *Utu* in Swahili, or *Unbu/Hunhu* in Shona – its conceptual representation is relatively uniform; an inclusive and constructive comprehension of the environment and oneself emerging from the joy, wisdom and knowledge of the community. Each image of Ubuntu is considered a self-explanatory part of an African paradigm as depicted in Bantu languages where it designates moral values of a person. It is, thus, derived from the Bantu words: *Munhu* (among the Shona and Ndaue of Zimbabwe and Mozambique respective), *Muthu* (among the Batswana of Botswana), *Omundu* (among the Herero of Namibia), and *Umntu* (among the Ndebele of

Zimbabwe and the Zulu/Xhosa of South Africa), among other Bantu linguistic groupings. Drawing its basis on moral virtues, Ubuntu remains the standard measure of moral excellent among the Bantu groupings of sub-Saharan Africa. This standard is taught through the generations and perpetuated by 'being together' in a continuous face-to-face encounter and holistic interaction with others (Ndaba 1994): it is a standard that rallies around the moral virtue of love, but powered with the virtues of respect and recognition of mutual co-existence.

The interminable aspects of Ubuntu were alluded to by Nelson Mandela. In his response to being asked to describe Ubuntu, Mandela told a story:

A traveller through a country would stop at a village, and he didn't have to ask for food or for water. Once he stops, the people give him food, entertain him. That is one aspect of Ubuntu, but it will have various aspects (Oppenheim 2012: 369).

This boundless expanse of communal virtues might be a major reason why there are much variances and formats in the descriptions of Ubuntu. Several authors from across disciplines have proffered their contributions. Nyamnjoh (2015a) writes about Ubuntu's tantalising stricture of "ever-becoming," but emphasising one of the important aspects of Ubuntu, conviviality. He expands upon how Ubuntu mediates the complex interplay of individual freedom and social obligation through conviviality and interdependence, giving real life examples of the interaction of Ubuntu in the realities of global inequalities, marginalisation and disconnection. On a similar note and with extensive references to literature, Mawere and Mubaya (2016) provide a characterisation of how Ubuntu harbours an array of logical, ethical, epistemological and metaphysical value-laden manifestations. They show that Ubuntu provides a well-established and highly advanced moral compass for the embodiment of human behaviour, with direct applications in business, religion, politics and law, education and management, among other spheres of life.

Ubuntu is rooted in universalism; its boundaries are elastic and permeable allowing it to be pragmatic and applicable in various

spheres of life. Yet, its precise definition remains tantalising and elusive. Nevertheless, it is relatively clear what Ubuntu is not: It is not all that is anti-social, individualistic, egocentric, uncaring, against the spirit of sharing, communalism, peace and unity. However, the realm ‘outside of Ubuntu’ as the realm ‘inside of Ubuntu’ itself is unlimited. Therefore, we can only provide for a small number of illustrations. Given the frequent claims to provide for solutions for problems in Africa that emanate from a Western realm, here we contrast African cultural manifestations of Ubuntu’s universal and transcendent nature with some contemporary cultural manifestations in a Western context as they are described by the Dutch theologian Gert-Jan Roest (2016). Roest illustrates a Western environment that entered the ‘Age of authenticity’. He recognises a Western practise with a self-consciousness that regards the individual (and therefore individualism) as the primary agent, interacting within communities like billiard balls interacting with each other. Further, in the Western context, Roest perceives the pursuits of the individual to be captivated by a striving for:

- i). Human power and agency;
- ii). Freedom and fulfilment in self-sufficiency, self-reliance, autonomy, through self-cultivation, and;
- iii). Immanent prosperity and security.

Against the Western cravings as described by Roest, Ubuntu does not sustain to such an individualistic outlook as it emphasises the importance of a group or community. It regards a person (and personhood) in relation to others, including the ancestors who were and the children who will become. Ubuntu, thus, tries to harmonise the past with the present and future. In other words, Ubuntu inspires the need to respect all dimensions of human life ranging from the physical to the spiritual/living-dead and the yet-to-be born (cf. Ramose 1999). This cosmological and metaphysical of Ubuntu understanding connotes that one becomes a full human being or person through other persons not on the basis of one’s self. Desmond Tutu (1999) captures this aptly when he uses the Xhosa proverb, *ungamntu ngabanye abantu* (Shona: *munhu nevamwe vanhu/a*

person is made a person by other persons). Thus, although Ubuntu considers human beings as most important, it explicitly links the empirical world and the cosmos. Further, it does not bifurcate between the community and the individual. Neither does Ubuntu regard a community in individualistic or collectivistic terms; it indicates a state of being, linking the community and individuals relationally into an ecological whole with fullness and sufficiency. Its bearing is, on the whole, guarding the honour and dignity of the community, with the community members (and those called for leadership) serving a common purpose of life as active, serving members. For Shona people of Zimbabwe, this purpose of life is to love unconditionally (Mawere 2010).

Further, Ubuntu does not subscribe to a dualistic rationality or a competitive or destructive view of the world (Mawere & van Stam, 2016). It neither induces self-love nor does it drive people to seek expressions that create individual names or seek personal glory, for instance by being labelled as ‘impressive, famous or spectacular’. In such acts of separation, Ubuntu prompts questions as to the wholeness of the person involved. In the same trait, Ubuntu considers, for instance, acts of violence and conflict – anything that separates people – as being inhumane (van Stam 2014). More so, Ubuntu does not fuel a search for self-sufficiency. *Being in need* provides a space for others to contribute and participate. In that manner, hospitality becomes a reciprocal endeavour and a vehicle for building balanced relationships.

In staccato: Ubuntu is not linked with hatred of other people and other beings; it is not conducive of violence of any form whether xenophobic, political, gender-based etc.; does not inspire hate language; it provides no ground for afrophobia; it does not inform racism; it gives no roots for tribalism or ethnocentrism; it does not sow the seed of division; it decries domination; it condemns hooliganism; it is divorced from cruelty; it is uncoupled to treachery; it provides no room for double standards; it denounces love of riches at the expense of others; it discredits success through sweat of other people; and it does not fan a love of war and the suffering of others.

From literature, observation, and experience, it emerges that Ubuntu signifies a notion that guides one to exercise the ‘right

behaviour' when in or outside the company of other people. Ubuntu encapsulates a communal aspect that allows and encourage people to do good to other beings (humans or otherwise). In the ensuing paragraphs, we try to explain the communal aspect of Ubuntu.

## **Love beyond self and individualism**

Bishop Desmond Tutu (1999) summed up the African focus on relationships in the premise that 'being together' is the ultimate goal of our existence as depicted in his deployment of the Xhosa proverb: *ungamntu ngabanye abantu*. This understanding aligns with the Christian Biblical Jesus Christ, who says "Abide in me, and I in you" (John 15:4). Being together is in practice an abiding in love and togetherness. It berates individualism: it is love beyond the individual. But what is such love?

Love is an immense buzz word. It has an array of meanings and interpretations. Now, as this text uses the English language, what does the word 'love' mean in English? As with all words, the word 'love' derives its meaning from the culture that moulds the word continuously. And that moulding centres on the Anglo-Saxon contexts in countries like England where the language originates and resides. Subsequently, the English word 'love' is embedded in linguistics and culture bound to individualism and an individualistic word-view (Miller 2015). As Roest (2016), Olivier (2011), and many others have shown, the consecutive self-gratifying understanding of love has become a potent source of the destruction of human community.

In a rendering of modern society, love is attributed a numinous agency experienced in sexual pleasure. Love is, thus, intrinsically linked with the Greek word '*eros*'. Bert Olivier (2011) argues that this (dominating) connection of love with *eros* aligns with a *raison d'être* that strives for a unifying self-love (Olivier, 2011). Contemporary music, which particularly mines the word love in all its forms, often explicitly links this tie of love with *eros*.

In individualistic environments, a self-centred concept of love is introduced early, as in the children's riddle: 'I love you, you love me, we are a happy family.' Here love is initiated by 'I' and 'you' as

individual entities that subsequently link through 'love'. However, such a self-enunciating view of love is not prevalent in Africa. In the African setting, love is better understood as a communal expression, where it is a social-self, the 'we,' that sustains life, life with a purpose.

The Greek word *agape* is one among several Hebrew and Greek words in the Bible that are all translated into the single English word love. *Agape* seems most close to an African understanding of love as the central nerve of Ubuntu on which all relationships are anchored. Perhaps such knowledge led John Mbiti (1998: 142) to write:

The Bible is very much an African book, in which African Christians and theologians see themselves and their people reflected and in which they find a personal place of dignity and acceptance before God.

When taking the English word love into the African environment, it does not fit with the contextual understanding of love. The English word 'love' does not readily transmit the concept of communal love. This void, we argue, is aptly filled by the word Ubuntu. In the next paragraphs, we try to bring the discussion to a different level, by linking Ubuntu to the concept of love, above all other good attributes of humanity. This linking of Ubuntu and love is opportune, as like Ubuntu, love resists to yield to a (conclusive) description. Love functions as a never ending fuel for human exploration, innovation, and creativity through expressions of art, words and virtuous actions.

### **Ubuntu as communal love**

Thaddeus Metz (2014) alludes to the connection of Ubuntu and love as he argues:

The union of sharing a way of life and caring about others' quality of life is basically what English speakers mean by a broad sense of friendship or even love. Hence, one major strand of traditional African culture places friendly (loving) relationships at the heart of how one ought to live" (p. 269).

What Mertz argues resonates with Munyaradzi Mawere's (2010) earlier contention in his paper: "On pursuit of the purpose of life [...]," where he establishes love as the main purpose of life – human existence – on earth. Mawere arrives at this conclusion through his theorisation of love, which he argues, always provides a [positive] service to the community. On this note, Mawere reasons that all human activities executed to promote happiness in society such as sharing, feeding, caring, giving and receiving, are hinged on love for none can involve himself/herself in such [activities] without embracing love. Using a case study of the Shona people of Mozambique and Zimbabwe, Mawere thus, advances that love is key to the cause or purpose of existence of human life on earth, which the Shona people traditionally acknowledge, strive to achieve, and foster in their relationships with one another and the environment they share others.

Nelson Mandela's life emanated an embodied, loving behaviour inspired through Ubuntu. Researching the conjecture of Mandela's life and Ubuntu, Claire Oppenheim (2012) distils how, in Ubuntu, communal activities depend on direct, face-to-face, positive interactions with community members. She recognises reciprocity in Ubuntu, where the 'humanity of every person is necessarily entwined with the Ubuntu of his or her community' (Ibid: 371). One, thus, seeks to play an active, direct and positive part in the whole. An example of a translation of Ubuntu in a communal love comes to the fore when Oppenheim outlines how the imprisoned South African ANC leadership, as a group, sought to befriend the warders at Robben Island (ibid: 382). Though it can be argued that their long-term, active, and harmonised seeking of relationships was done to draw some favours from the warders, it can also be argued from an African view point that such seeking against all odds; in an oppressive regime that institutionalised separation (like banning) as a tool of control, was an expression of Ubuntu. In general, the story of Mandela's life, embedded in Ubuntu from cradle to grave, depicts a poignant example of the saying: 'Love conquers all'. It is a story that without understanding the primacy of love in human relationships, one can hardly understand it.



Another example of communal love is adorned in the Igbo proverb: 'It takes a village to raise a child' (Shona *lit. trans. Mwana haazi wemunhu mumwe*), with many equivalences in other African societies. In a traditional African setting, all adults are considered empowered and responsible for commendation or admonishment of children they meet up with in the community. This interaction takes shape in both the rewarding of constructive behaviour and the stern admonishment of undesired behaviour. Such involves active interaction with children, whether they are part of one's family or not. This interaction demands a deliberate and ongoing effort to gain communal knowledge of the desired behaviour of children in the community, by all.

As communal love is all encompassing, it not only addresses leadership and family life situations – as in the example above – but also guides the exploits to secure livelihoods and the allocation of resources (Sheneberger and van Stam 2011). For instance, in the traditional African community, all members were responsible for the security of the farms worked upon by families of the community. Each community member would participate in a collective or individual capacity to assure there are no stray animals or uninvited strangers entering agricultural areas that could affect the livelihood of community members. Another example is the communal work parties – *Nhimbe/humwe* or *Ilima* in Shona and Ndebele respectively – that seek to lessen individual labour burdens by community members sharing the work.

As the last example, we mention the generous hospitality displayed in African life. The sharing of any available resource, as alluded to in the quote of Nelson Mandela above, is a common experience for travellers to and within the African continent. The active inclusion of visitors to partake in the activities one happen to stumble into, even accepting foreigners to share in Africa's riches (Nyamnjoh, 2015a), is a remarkable example of communal love. From these examples, these empirics, can we find more references to get a better understanding of what is communal love entails? With the English word *love* being 'privatised' to refer to individuals, how can we gather more solidity on how 'communal love' exists?

Undoubtedly, the understanding of the transcendence, both in Africa and Europe, is heavily influenced by the Abrahamic religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Here we review the nature of 'love' in the context of one of them: Christianity. The Bible states "God is love" (1 John 4:8). In the context of the assertion of communal love, we remind ourselves that from the New Testament, Christianity regards God as a community, being three persons in one, being the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14). In this sense, God can be regarded as a community of love, where three persons love each other, and the Trinity emanates love.

While deeply rooted in African cosmology, the emanation of communal love is directed to another community: the Church, "the community of believers" now commonplace in African communities. At this level, one can see the existence of communal love in an emanating communal entity (God) and a receiving communal entity (the Church). Even the summary of the Gospel, 'that God loved the world so much that he gave his only begotten Son' (John 3:16) can be seen as a statement of communal love - the triunion God - for a community - the whole wide world. This [overriding] aspect of God and love is grossly overlooked in a contemporary individual framing of the Gospel, where God's redemptive love is translated into an aim towards an individual person (Roest, 2016). In the light of this communal love, even the Biblical Jesus Christ's actions can be seen as principally communal as He asserts in one of the texts: "Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing" (John 5:19). This statement shows the centrality of community, which in turn hinges on love. The applicability of Ubuntu in such contexts as religion, among others, shows its agility, fluidity and pragmatic underpinnings.

Within communal love, freedom of (individual) humans is not arbitrary as all freedoms are rooted in love. Or, as Nyamnjoh (2015a: 15) states: "Ubuntu challenges us to recognise co-existence, intermingling and interdependence as a permanent work in progress that should not be abandoned in a hurry or by claiming freedom in abstraction". The mechanism to do so, we argue, is grounded in communal love.

When one looks to the famous love passage in the Bible and translates the word love with Ubuntu, it shows a remarkable description of Ubuntu, that we assert, resonates well with most writings on Ubuntu as captured in the following:

Ubuntu endures with patience and serenity, Ubuntu is kind and thoughtful, and is not jealous or envious; Ubuntu does not brag and is not proud or arrogant. Ubuntu is not rude; Ubuntu is not self-seeking, Ubuntu is not provoked [nor overly sensitive and easily angered]; Ubuntu does not take into account a wrong endured. Ubuntu does not rejoice at injustice, but rejoices with the truth [when right and truth prevail]. Ubuntu bears all things [regardless of what comes], believes all things [looking for the best in each one], hopes all things [remaining steadfast during difficult times], endures all things [without weakening]. Ubuntu never fails [it never fades nor ends] (1 Corinthians 13:4-8a, AMP).

### **African agency for transformation through Ubuntu**

With regards to African agency for transformation in circumstances of oppression, an understanding of Ubuntu and its representation of communal love is hampered by a hegemonic (and alien) cultural view of human agency that is emanating from the West. Pervasive non-relational ontologies link into particular (Western situated) views on rationality, time, freedom and community. These foreign ontologies are unhelpful to gain a comprehensive appreciation of the transcendental nature of Ubuntu and the African cultural agency embodying communal love. Subsequently, the domination of colonial behaviour can give rise to an anti-Western polemic. However, continued imperialistic aspirations impact the setting of standards for education, the definition of (free) markets, and idolisation of an instrumental rationality. Therefore, there is critical need to continue to engage with foreign views and practice in an effort to assess its congruence with Ubuntu. Of course, this does not disempower a need to resist and unmask fruits of imperialistic and orientalist orientations through the exposure of a colonial legacy in contemporary systems and an anthropological poverty in cultural

sensitivity. Peace-building efforts based upon ‘external dominance will not hold in the African setting.

Africa’s cultural roots, embedded in Ubuntu, remain under siege. In an uninterrupted period since the start of slavery about 500 years ago, foreign powers have subdued African agency and plundered Africa (Bart-Williams 2015; Nyamnjoh 2015a). Contemporary political, social, and economic changes on a global scale, including a single globalisation narrative and an Information and Communication Technology hegemony, continue to assault and affect Africa. Globalisation results in ‘context’ becoming a term with fluidity. However, due to persistent underrepresentation and a limited African mobility and inclusion, most, if not all, foreign influence negates (and subsequently demolishes) Ubuntu. Such influence pro-/imposed frameworks in direct opposition to Ubuntu and its communal expression of love. However, experiences from other cultures under long-term siege (for example, Judaism) have shown that cultures can be resilient. As Ubuntu seems well fit to provide for metaphysical grip in times of hardship, there is much room for trust in the continuity of its philosophy.

Returning to the goal of this book, we aim for the transformation of evil to good; the experiences of violence – with impacts either directly or indirectly – affect African communities on both on community and personal levels. Within the African society, this impact must be accessed through lenses provided for by Ubuntu. For instance, evil deeds will lead to the questioning of the personhood of its perpetrators (van Stam, 2014). Therefore, in the African context, the measure of repentance and reconciliation will be assessed through the same lenses. As this chapter shows, Ubuntu signifies the presence of communal love, this presence, and its agency to conquer evil, represents a tangible hope and the means for transformation.

When Ubuntu is recognised as a synonym of communal love, it provides a basis for a communion-in-otherness, an additional understanding of how Ubuntu provides for an embrace (and forgiveness) of perpetrators of any form of violence and how it equips communities to encapsulate all and change according to the needs of reconciliation. Ubuntu provides hope, a source of revelation, and practical, contextual suggestions on how to restore

communal balance with restoration of losses, for Africa. In other words, Ubuntu strives also for restoration of communal balance where the wronged have to have their losses restored as in the cases of *ngozi* (or *ingozi* in Ndebele) or avenging spirits. *Ngozi*, as believed by many African cultures such as the Shona, is a vengeful spirit that haunts and kill members of those that murdered another to ensure that [restorative] justice is met (Mawere 2005). The *ngozi* only stops wreaking havoc in the perpetrator's family once appeasement is done through payment of heads of cattle, a young girl, money or any other form of payment as demanded by the avenging spirit. One of the central values of Ubuntu, therefore, is [restorative] justice. In this type of justice, pacification of the deceased's spirit signifies 'being in relation,' from which there is due recognition of both particularities – for instance, actions from perpetrators and the effects for the victims – and relationalities – such as the health of the communities and the effect of destructive forces. The transcendental values, encapsulated by what is termed Ubuntu in Africa, thus, represent a universal source of inspiration for any human being, anywhere in the world in so far as it quests to ensure justice and peace.

The recognition of Ubuntu to encompass communal love is instrumental in the desire to recognise effective means – those of love – already available and exercised in contemporary Africa that can be used to assist in the transformation from evil to good. The ethics of Ubuntu, therefore, is not grounded in the need of the individual or human society as a whole, but in a communal love aiming for taking away shame and guilt. As an example of the Christian faith, the reconciling act in Jesus Christ can, therefore, be considered as an act of communal love catering for megacosmic harmony. One could regard Ubuntu and the communal love it encapsulates as a seed that yields fruit: being together in community where everyone is expected to leave at peace with all others, including "other beings" (cf. Mawere 2015).

## Conclusion

The crystallisation of transcendental, universal values and African philosophy in the term Ubuntu can be understood as a rich and broad

concept. The presence of Ubuntu means a presence of communal love. The practice of communal love is alive in sub-Saharan Africa, and, upon sensitisation, can be recognised as a theme in the discourse on Ubuntu.

Any review of violence, politicking and crisis with the aim to discern avenues for transformation, restoration and change needs the ingredient of wholesome love. Such love must encapsulate all and sundry, all affected humans and environments. Due to its grounding of communal love, we propose that Ubuntu is equipping an apt and present philosophy and means of engagement. Rereading the extended knowledge base on African cultural behaviour through the lens of 'Ubuntu = communal love' can provide new and exciting avenues for the development and activation of specific, contextually adapt restorative interventions. Only contextually sound efforts embedded in the local culture can provide for sustainable peace and reconciliation and a wholesome transformation towards long-term stability and sufficiency in Africa.

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### **Instrumentalisation of Traditional Institutions in Xenophobic Violence against Zimbabweans in Botswana during the New Millennium**

*Fidelis Peter Thomas Duri*

#### **Introduction**

As is the case across the African continent, the Botswana-Zimbabwe border is a colonial creation that separated indigenous people, particularly the Kalanga and the Birwa, with a common history characterised by various socio-economic and political commonalities and interactions (Morapedi 2007). Considerable interaction, however, continued between Africans across the border during the colonial and post-colonial periods. Before Botswana became independent in 1966, for example, many of its citizens, the Batswana, mostly from the northern, eastern and north-eastern regions of the country were migrant labourers in various parts of colonial Zimbabwe. In addition, several borderline Batswana bought their groceries from shops on the Zimbabwean side (Morapedi 2007). Following the discovery of diamonds during the 1970s, Botswana's policy of openness and acceptance attracted a significant number of immigrants, including Zimbabweans, particularly those with skills relevant to the mining industry (Nyamnjoh 2002). Also, during Zimbabwe's liberation war from the mid-1970s until independence in 1980, many Zimbabweans also sought refuge in Botswana (Dale 1993). At one time during Zimbabwe's war of independence, about 20 000 Zimbabwean refugees were accommodated at the Dukwi Refugee Camp alone near Francistown and in Selibe Phikwe (Campbell and Crush 2012). The movement of refugees outside the camps was, however, restricted. Most of the Zimbabwean refugees returned home after the independence of their country in 1980 (Campbell and Crush 2012). From the early 1980s into the mid-1980s, an estimated 5 000 Zimbabweans, mostly the ethnic Ndebele,

from the western provinces of Matabeleland fled across the border into Botswana to seek refuge as a result of the government crackdown on dissidents (Campbell and Crush 2012). The 1990s witnessed a significant number of Zimbabweans coming to Botswana to seek livelihoods, owing to the socio-economic hardships brought about by the government's implementation of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme which involved, among other things, job cuts and deregulation of commodity prices. Most of the migrants were mobile professionals whose skills were needed in Botswana and cross-border traders (Campbell and Crush 2012).

It can therefore be noted that there was significant movement of human beings and commodities across the Botswana-Zimbabwe border since the colonial period. In addition, there was a great deal of coexistence between African communities astride the border prior to the year 2000. In fact, many Botswana rural communities along the border hosted and employed Zimbabweans who had been displaced by the liberation struggle during the 1970s and the Matabeleland disturbances of the mid-1980s (Morapedi 2007). As the influx of downtrodden and poverty-stricken Zimbabweans into Botswana reached unprecedented levels from the year 2000, owing to the grinding socio-economic hardships and widespread political violence, xenophobic tendencies among the Botswana emerged. These xenophobic tendencies were characterised by fear, aversion and hostility towards foreigners (MacDonald and Jacobs 2005). Traditional leaders such as chiefs, headmen and their councillors, for example, increasingly felt threatened by the rising numbers of Zimbabwean migrants who they accused of undermining their authority by destabilising their rural communities in various ways such as committing crime, prostitution, spreading diseases and creating unemployment. As will be noted later on in this chapter, the Botswana media and various arms of the national government such as the police, cabinet ministers and civil servants also contributed in flaring xenophobic sentiments by blaming the influx of Zimbabweans for most of the problems that the country was facing such as the rise in criminal activities.

Given this background, this chapter examines the violence against Zimbabwean migrants in Botswana's rural areas from the year

2000, which was largely carried out by traditional leaders such as chiefs, headmen and their councillors with the blessings of the national government and its various arms such as the judiciary, the army and the police. Faced with various problems such as the HIV/AIDS pandemic, rising unemployment and the upsurge in criminal activities at a time when the influx of Zimbabwean migrants assumed unprecedented proportions, the Botswana national government authorised traditional leaders to get rid of undocumented immigrants, mostly Zimbabweans. Having been empowered in this way, Botswana chiefs and headmen became central figures in the violence against Zimbabwean migrants, which gradually assumed xenophobic proportions. In actual fact, most Botswana chiefs and headmen sought to reassert their traditional hegemony which they felt was being threatened by the increasing presence of Zimbabwean migrants. These transnational developments perceptibly undermined the authority of traditional leaders and compromised the wellbeing of their local communities in various ways. This chapter argues that xenophobic violence does not have firm ideological foundations but is strongly rooted in struggles over material and immaterial resources. Thus, the active involvement of Botswana traditional leaders and their local rural communities in violent attacks on Zimbabwean migrants shows that xenophobia can be a collective identity, characterised by ethnic and socio-cultural demands, that is mobilised in order to safeguard the access to material and immaterial resources (Lesetedi and Modie-Moroka 2007). Violent xenophobic tendencies in Botswana should also be viewed in the context of “a resurgence of identity politics and overt tensions on the question of belonging, as ... ethnic groups seek equity, better representation and more access to national resources and opportunities ... in an era of accelerated flows of capital and migrants” (Nyamnjoh 2002: 754).

### **Influx of Zimbabweans into Botswana during the new millennium**

The influx of Zimbabweans, the majority of whom were poverty-ridden, into Botswana attained unprecedented proportions from the

year 2000. This was largely the result of Zimbabwe's socio-economic and political crisis which I have discussed in detail in another chapter in this book. The grinding socio-economic and political hardships from the year 2000 resulted in many Zimbabweans fleeing across national borders to seek better livelihoods. In Southern Africa, most Zimbabwean migrants were found in South Africa and Botswana largely because they were the region's two most economically-successful nations (Nyamnjoh 2006). South Africa was one of Africa's largest economies while Botswana was one of Africa's wealthiest countries (Plentive, 26 October 2007). In South Africa and Botswana, Zimbabwean migrants were commonly known as *makwerekwere*, a contemptuous slang word referring to foreigners, particularly illegal immigrants who were often viewed with suspicion as parasitic and dangerous strangers (Hungwe 2012; Nyamnjoh 2006; Word Press, 23 May 2008). Most Zimbabwean migrants in Botswana were from the two Matebeleland provinces and towns such as Bulawayo and Gwanda that lie in close proximity to the border (Butcher, 11 July 2003). In July 2004, however, there were reports of Zimbabweans from as far as Harare, 760 kilometres away, entering various parts of Botswana (Mafingenyi, 15 July 2004).

In the year 2000, further reports indicated that more than 1 000 migrants, mostly Zimbabweans, were being deported from Botswana every month (Nyamnjoh 2002). During the year 2002, Botswana authorities claimed to have deported 26 717 illegal Zimbabweans (*Associated Press*, 16 July 2003). In May 2003, Botswana authorities claimed that they were arresting an average of 200 illegal Zimbabwean migrants every day (Mukumbira, 1 May 2003). During the same month, it was estimated that there were about 40 000 illegal Zimbabwean immigrants in Botswana (Mukumbira, 1 May 2003). In July 2003, Botswana government reports indicated that there were about 60 000 illegal Zimbabweans in the country (Butcher, 11 July 2003). During the same month, thousands of hungry Zimbabweans were reportedly begging for work in various in various parts of Gaborone's city centre. It was common for them to whisper, "piece work, piece work" to any passer-by. Some of them brandished their Ordinary Level certificates as proof to potential employers that they had passed secondary school education in Zimbabwe and were

therefore employable. Others showed retrenchment letters from Zimbabwean companies that had long since closed as reference (Butcher, 11 July 2003).

The Zimbabwe Political Victims Association (ZIPOVA) (1 November 2004) estimated that there were about 700 000 Zimbabwean migrants in Botswana by the end of the year 2004. This was an alarming development that virtually constituted an invasion, considering that Botswana's population stood at around 1.8 million in the year 2003 (Mukumbira, 20 May 2003). Between January and March 2004, 8 394 undocumented Zimbabweans were deported (Lefko-Everett, 1 September 2004). In the year 2005 alone, Botswana repatriated more than 2 500 Zimbabweans every week (Lesetedi and Modie-Moroka 2007). In June 2006, large numbers of Zimbabweans were a common sight at open spaces in Gaborone's White City suburb and whenever a vehicle stopped, they rushed to beg for piece jobs. The area where they congregated became popularly known as Harare (Dube, 4 June 2006). The number of Zimbabweans deported per month rose from 683 in January 2008 to 8 314 in December 2009 (Nyathi, 25 November 2013). In the year 2009, about 100 000 Zimbabweans were deported from Botswana (Betts and Kaytaz, 2010). The Botswana government deported 2 600 Zimbabweans in December 2010, 2 423 in December 2011 and 2 180 in December 2012. During the year 2012, some 17 402 Zimbabweans were deported while 22 675 were deported in the first 10 months of the year 2013 (Nyathi, 25 November 2013).

The government of Botswana employed various strategies to curb the influx of illegal immigrants into the country. From the year 2003, for example, it began erecting a 500-kilometre electric fence along the border with Zimbabwe (Munnion, 3 July 2008). During late October 2006, a military-style operation against illegal immigrants, mostly Zimbabweans, was launched in Gaborone. The army and the police went door-to-door at night in suburbs such as Ledumadumane smashing down doors, demanding identity documents and arresting illegal immigrants (SAMP, 8 November 2006). In July 2008, the government deployed soldiers with heavy artillery along the border with Zimbabwe as more Zimbabweans fled the country due to

escalating socio-economic hardships and political violence (Munnion, 3 July 2008).

Thus, the new millennium witnessed an unprecedented influx of Zimbabweans into Botswana as they fled the debilitating socio-economic and political crisis in their country. This influx increasingly agitated Botswana citizens as the competition for resources escalated. The next section dwells on the alarmist reaction of the Botswana national government towards this influx which significantly contributed to the development of xenophobic sentiments among Botswana traditional leaders and their rural communities towards Zimbabwean migrants during the new millennium.

### **The role of the Botswana national government in flaring xenophobic sentiments against Zimbabweans**

The reaction of the Botswana national government to the influx of Zimbabweans was generally alarmist. This general attitude tended to unsettle many Botswana citizens and inflame anti-Zimbabwean sentiments. Government authorities often used undocumented migrants as scapegoats for various socio-economic challenges the country was facing (Campbell 2006). This resonates with the scapegoating hypothesis that Marongwe and Mawere, in this volume, discuss for South Africa. During the first decade of the new millennium, Botswana itself faced a number of socio-economic challenges. These included the increase in the cost of food and fuel and rising unemployment. In addition, Botswana had one of the highest HIV/AIDS infection rates in the world at the beginning of the year 2008 (Hanson 2008).

Several government authorities made several allegations against the influx of Zimbabweans, which intimated that these strained Botswana's economy. As well, they reified tendencies that spoke to the institutionalisation of anti-Zimbabwean feelings. On 3 March 2003, for instance, an official in the Office of the President of Botswana lamented: "It is an economic drain for Botswana to continue to receive and return illegals. Our asylum landscape does not entertain economic migrants" (*Irin News*, 4 March 2003: 1). These

sentiments were reiterated by Roy Sekgororoane, Botswana's Chief Immigration Officer, on 16 July 2003 who contended that:

They overstretch our facilities and resources because illegal immigrants once apprehended, have to be placed in temporary shelters like detention centres and prisons. We do not have the manpower to deal with this problem. On average, the government spends about 50 pula (US\$10) per illegal immigrant on repatriation. This includes transportation, feeding expenses and subsistence costs for repatriation officers (*Irin News*, 17 July 2003: 1).

In August 2007, the government warned that there could be food shortages in Botswana due to the influx of Zimbabweans. Matlhaba Phiri, the Botswana Police Chief Superintendent, for example, stated:

We are currently experiencing mass influx of Zimbabweans here in Botswana due to current shortages rocking Zimbabwe [...]. Since the price slash in Zimbabwe, the country is reportedly experiencing adverse shortages resulting in scores of people crossing into Botswana to buy groceries and other important goods. This will soon cause shortages in this country as well (Nkala, 14 August 2007: 1).

On 16 January 2016, Galeitsiwe Ramokapane, an official from Botswana's Ministry of Agriculture, blamed undocumented Zimbabwean immigrants for spreading crop and animal diseases in the country. He avers:

We have a problem of Foot-and-Mouth disease in the north of Botswana, suspected to be fuelled by illegal immigrants from Zimbabwe. The ministry has officers working at the country's borders to inspect all the food that comes into the country and prohibits any entry of food suspected of any disease, but the problem is that some illegal immigrants cross into Botswana with such food (*Standard*, 17 January 2016: 3).

Botswana authorities also attributed the upsurge in crime to the influx of undocumented Zimbabweans. In December 2015, for example, Oratile Setshwalo, a Botswana police superintendant, alleged that Zimbabwean immigrants were to blame for most of the crimes that were committed across the country (*Masasi*, 9 December 2015). These sentiments were echoed by Detective Assistant

Superintendent Motlapele Maropamabe, the Officer-in-Charge of the North Eastern District, in March 2016 who stated that the influx of undocumented Zimbabweans in the district had resulted in the increase of cross-border criminal activities such as housebreaking, burglary and stock theft. He urged the Batswana to stop harbouring or employing undocumented immigrants. He said:

We do not know how they manage to cross into Botswana, but when we do patrols within villages in my policing district, we always arrest them in high numbers. Some Batswana hire them and fail to pay them, which sometimes forces the illegal immigrants to pay themselves by selling the properties of their employers and in some dire situations causing harm to their employers (*Bulawayo* 24, 30 March 2016: 1).

It is quite apparent that the response of the Botswana government to the inflows of Zimbabweans was generally alarmist thereby contributing significantly to the prevalence of xenophobic tendencies among its citizens. These reactions by the national government largely shaped the attitudes of Batswana traditional leaders and their rural communities, an aspect which the next section focuses on.

### **Attitudes of Batswana traditional leaders and rural communities towards the influx of Zimbabwean migrants**

Traditional leaders and their rural communities, particularly in eastern Botswana, along the border with Zimbabwe, increasingly became agitated by the unprecedented influx of Zimbabweans during the new millennium. Most chiefs and headmen viewed the increased presence of foreign nationals, together with an escalation in the prevalence of vices such as crime and prostitution, in their areas as an affront to their traditional authority. In addition, the traditional leaders and their communities also felt threatened by the unprecedented presence of Zimbabweans that heightened the competition for resources and employment opportunities. In the year 2003, for example, unemployment in Botswana was estimated to be



19% and more than 20 000 school-leavers faced a bleak future because they could not secure employment (Morapedi 2007). The Batswana traditional leaders and their subjects, with the backing of the national government, blamed foreigners, particularly undocumented Zimbabweans, for causing the challenges the country was facing. These challenges included unemployment, the outbreak of diseases and an upsurge in crime and prostitution.

In January 2003, anti-Zimbabwean antagonism gained impetus following the outbreak of the Foot-and-Mouth Disease in north-eastern Botswana, along the border with Zimbabwe, which killed many cattle. Undocumented Zimbabwean migrants were blamed for the outbreak on grounds that most of them did not use the officially designated points to enter Botswana where the veterinary department could have disinfected them and their luggage from traces of the highly contagious disease. The hatred towards Zimbabwean migrants therefore heightened because most Batswana rural communities regarded cattle as their source of livelihood and a major store of their wealth (Mukumbira, 20 May 2003).

Zimbabwean migrants were also blamed for the upsurge in various criminal activities. In late April 2003, Mukumbira (1 May 2003: 1), a journalist, captured the increasingly anti-Zimbabwean sentiments in Botswana as follows:

The Batswana are increasingly and openly accusing Zimbabweans, whether illegal or legal immigrants, of all the evils of the world. Accusations range from stealing and prostitution to spreading the Aids virus. Of late, they have also accused illegal Zimbabwean migrants of spreading the highly contagious foot and mouth livestock disease that broke out in Botswana in January.

In mid-May 2003, anti-Zimbabwean sentiments became widespread, following a government announcement that 26 214 Zimbabwean migrants had been involved in criminal activities in the country during that year alone and that 681 were serving prison terms (Mukumbira, 20 May 2003). When a crime, such as housebreaking or theft, was committed, noted Lesetedi and Modie-Moroka 2007: 9),

the most immediate response common among the Batswana was “it must be Zimbabweans.” In November 2003, Chief Seleka Paul Moipolai of Matsiloje village charged that Zimbabweans were criminals who stole food, cattle, clothes and other items from his people (Murphy, 25 November 2003). In February 2005, Jackson Ofentse, a Motswana headman in charge of Changate village in northern Botswana, just five kilometres from the border with Zimbabwe, said of Zimbabwean migrants:

Please do not ever mention to me the criminals from across the border. Our women can no longer gather firewood in the bush for fear of being raped. Our houses are not safe anymore, and even our livestock find their way across the border (*Irin News*, 23 February 2005: 1).

In February 2010, Dick Matopote, the Ramokwebana Chief, castigated illegal Zimbabwean migrants as dangerous criminals:

Illegal migrants can be very cruel because they know that it is not easy for them to be traced. Keeping them in our homes is just like taking a bath with a hungry crocodile. A Zimbabwean is only good when he is dead. We do not sleep and life is very tough here in this village. People are now beggars because illegal migrants steal from houses and even fields (*Voice of Botswana*, 20 February 2010: 1).

He further added that most illegal migrants also waylaid fellow Zimbabweans along the border, robbed them of their possessions and assaulted them. He urged villagers not to accommodate foreign nationals at their homes (*Voice of Botswana*, 20 February 2010).

In September 2015, the Dikgo community comprising of villagers situated along the border with Zimbabwe alleged that Zimbabwean migrants were committing various crimes in their area. Tapson Jackals, the Jackalas Number 1 Village chief, complained that Batswana villagers along the border were living in terror due to the activities of criminals who stole their property and made off with it to Zimbabwe. He said the most affected borderline villages were

Ramokwebana, Tshesebe, Butale, Siviya, Jackalas Number 1 and Matsiloje. He argued that Zimbabwean thieves mostly stole clothes and electrical equipment such as radios, televisions and computers. He also stated that some Batswana villages had previously taken the law into their own hands by illegally crossing the border into Zimbabwe in pursuit of thieves who had stolen their goods (Bithoko, 21 September 2015).

These sentiments reflect the mounting antagonism against Zimbabwean immigrants among the Batswana traditional leaders and their rural communities during the new millennium. The agitation of Batswana traditional leaders and their rural subjects culminated in xenophobic violence against Zimbabwean migrants. As will be noted in the next section, most of the xenophobic attacks had the blessings of the national government which, among other things, empowered traditional leaders to prosecute undocumented immigrants. These efforts by the Botswana national government to boost the power of traditional leaders and mobilise tradition were an attempt to curtail irregular transnational mobility of people and goods which, among other things, constituted one of the major challenges of the country was facing during the new millennium.

### **Batswana traditional authorities and rural communities versus Zimbabwean migrants**

Anti-Zimbabwean measures by Batswana traditional rulers and their local communities took various forms. Several traditional leaders along the border with Zimbabwe instructed their subjects not to welcome Zimbabwean migrants at their premises. In November 2002, for example, some Batswana residents put up posters on their gates written, “No Zimbabwean allowed in this yard” (Mukumbira, 20 May 2003).

In August 2003, in the rural North-Eastern District, following a spate of violent incidents of theft, robbery, burglary and rape, allegedly committed by Zimbabwean migrants, the local traditional leaders called for the expulsion of Zimbabweans (Morapedi 2007). Angry villagers convened a series of meetings at Masunga, the headquarters of the north-eastern district, during which

Zimbabweans were blamed for the upsurge in crime. During the proceedings, the police station commander of Masunga reported that undocumented Zimbabweans committed most of the crimes which included a case of rape, one case of attempted rape, 10 cases of burglary and theft, two cases of stock theft, one case of murder and one case of bicycle theft. The local hospital matron also told the gathering that Zimbabweans had vandalised the hospital fence and made off with valuable equipment and anti-retroviral medication (Morapedi 2007). The meetings resolved that “Zimbabweans, whether documented or undocumented, were ordered to leave the village immediately” (Morapedi 2007: 237). They also recommended the resuscitation of the traditional practice of introducing incomers to the chief before they could be allowed to stay in the village. The Masunga villagers went on to form a militia unit known as the Zimbabwe Clean-up Campaign to literally “hunt” and “capture illegal immigrants” and surrender them to the chief (Morapedi 2007: 246). Similar vigilante groups were also formed in neighbouring villages (Morapedi 2007). By February 2005, “Zimbabweans had become the target of a growing vigilante movement” in the rural villages of Botswana bordering Zimbabwe (*Irin News*, 23 February 2005: 1).

Similar events also unfolded in Tlokweng village, east of Gaborone, in August 2003. Following a spate of crimes that included assaults, robberies, burglaries and rape, the Batlokwa villagers convened a *kgotla* (meeting) to deliberate on the crisis. During the meeting, traditional leaders and the angry villagers, with the concurrence of the police, blamed Zimbabwean migrants for the crimes (Morapedi 2007). Zimbabweans were also castigated as prostitutes who were “stealing their wives” and spreading HIV/AIDS (Lesetedi and Modie-Moroka 2007: 7). The Batlokwa Deputy Chief informed the gathering that at least 10 criminal cases involving Zimbabweans were brought before his court every day (Morapedi 2007). The meeting ordered all Zimbabweans, documented and undocumented, to vacate the area with immediate effect (Morapedi 2007; Murphy, 25 November 2003). Like the Masunga villagers, they also suggested that foreigners should first approach the chief before settling in the area (Morapedi 2007). They also resolved to form a *mophato* (regiment) in order to “flush out

Zimbabweans from the village” and reduce incidents of crime (Morapedi 2007: 246; Mukumbira, 20 May 2003: 1). The Batlokwa Deputy Chief justified the expulsion of Zimbabweans saying:

We can no longer travel freely at night. Our kids cannot go to school and we cannot even send them on errands because they fear Zimbabweans. Crime in the village has gone up because of these people. Rapes, assaults and break-ins into houses have increased dramatically. We have arrived at a time when we say enough is enough. We cannot take it anymore. We therefore agreed that Zimbabweans should leave the village in peace (Morapedi 2007: 238).

In his response to the eviction of Zimbabweans from the villages of Masunga and Tlokweng during the year 2003, Botswana’s Foreign Minister sounded to support the traditional leaders and their communities, arguing that they were demonstrating their anger. Instead, he advised Zimbabweans to assist in maintaining law and order by reporting criminals to the police (Morapedi 2007).

In the year 2003, the Botswana government amended its laws to allow Customary Courts under traditional leaders to handle specified criminal and civil cases. The traditional courts were also empowered by the country’s constitution to try foreigners (Murphy, 25 November 2003). In addition, the constitution authorised Customary Courts to administer corporal punishment in public to offenders, with the exception of those who were not medically fit, women and any men above the age of 40 years (UN General Assembly Human Rights Council, 2008:4). Customary Courts were also authorised to have their own local police officers who operated alongside the national police force. It was noted that both police forces “prefer to use Customary Courts because they dispense swift and accessible justice” (UN General Assembly Human Rights Council, 2008:4). After serving their punishment at the traditional courts, the migrants were taken to the Centre for Illegal Immigrants outside Francistown where they were detained awaiting deportation (Murphy, 2 December 2003).

In January 2004, 100 Zimbabweans were flogged at a traditional court for illegally entering Botswana (Tsiko, 3 February 2004). In this case, a customary law court ordered the migrants to be given three lashes each in public. In condemning such “dehumanising and humiliating” judicial corporal measures, Harrison Nkomo, a Zimbabwean human rights lawyer, said, “It is a gross human rights abuse. You cannot allow that to happen. Lashing an adult cannot be expected this day and age” (Tsiko, 3 February 2004: 1). In August 2004, Nicholas Goche, Zimbabwe’s Security Minister, expressed similar sentiments arguing that: “The act of flogging law-breakers in public is primitive and unruly for an adult to be humiliated in that fashion. We have even stopped flogging our children in schools here in Zimbabwe and feel Botswana should move with the times” (*British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) News*, 10 August 2004: 1). In response, Oliphant Mfa, Botswana’s Assistant Minister for Presidential Affairs, said, “We do not discriminate and we are not going to give Zimbabweans any preferential treatment. Take something like pick-pocketing and petty theft, you do not take someone to prison for such crimes. You give them two or three lashes, and tell them to go home and never repeat that again” (*BBC News*, 10 August 2004: 1).

In February 2004, Peter Tshukudu, an official of the Botswana-based African Civil Society, lamented the inhumane measures, characterised by force and violence, taken by Botswana traditional leaders to deal with the influx of undocumented migrants into the country:

You just have to go to *kgotla* meetings and see how they attack the Zimbabweans. The language used and the accusations thrown at our fellow Africans are so inhuman. Botswana only feel that it is all right when the Zimbabweans work for them as cheap labour and it is not fair. What is being done to Zimbabweans in this country is so inhuman that you can feel nothing but sheer pity (Tsiko, 3 February 2004: 1).

In November 2004, the Zimbabwe Political Victims Association (ZIPOVA) (1 November 2004: 7-8) complained about the “social debacle” and gross human rights abuses in Botswana where “local

chiefs, defence and other local security officers subject illegal immigrants to rape, brutality and medieval floggings.” The developments clearly show the problems that emanated from the decision by the Botswana national government to empower traditional leaders to prosecute undocumented immigrants.

During September and October 2006, approximately 6 000 Zimbabweans were severely flogged, with some of them sustaining permanent injuries, by the Botswana Police Service and traditional chiefs for entering the country illegally (SAMP, 29 November 2006). The Special Support Group, a paramilitary unit of the Botswana Police Service, was responsible for policing the border and together with traditional chiefs, inflicted various forms of xenophobia-related brutalities on undocumented Zimbabwean migrants. More often than not, the police arrested illegal migrants in various parts of the country such as Gaborone and transported them to remote rural villages where traditional authorities sentenced them to floggings (SAMP, 29 November 2006). According to a Zimbabwean taxi driver from Plumtree, the police usually handed the migrants to the traditional leaders in the remote countryside because “the Magistrates Courts are manned by Zimbabweans, so they are hesitant to take us there because of the possibility of a fair trial” (SAMP, 29 November 2006: 1).

In July 2015, nine Zimbabwean men sustained severe injuries carried on the orders of a Batswana chief for entering the country illegally. The men, who were in the company of Zimbabwean women, were arrested by the police on 29 June 2015 at Tati Siding in Francistown and taken to the homestead of Chief Nkgageng. After being separated from the women, the men were instructed to undress and lie down on their stomachs. The chief ordered that they be thoroughly beaten on their buttocks using sticks (*Herald*, 6 July 2015). Ezekiel Mukuya, who worked as a tout in Francistown and one of the victims, narrated their ordeal as follows:

When we were taken to the chief's homestead, we appeared before his community court. We begged to be pardoned after pointing out that we were in the country just to make a living and not cause problems, but they would not entertain us. The chief

told us that we would receive six cuts as corporal punishment for being in the country illegally. I am still in pain... (*Herald*, 6 July 2015: 3).

Mukuya further stated that he was unable to sit for three days as a result of the severe injuries. Finance Moyo, a Zimbabwean woman who was also arrested, said she and other female detainees were not caned but fined P200 each (*The Herald*, 6 July 2015). In July 2015, a Botswana police officer reiterated that the country's laws empowered traditional customary courts to handle illegal immigrants. He added that chiefs were authorised to administer a maximum of six lashes to an illegal migrant (*Herald*, 6 July 2015).

Botswana villagers sometimes took the law into their own hands to punish suspected Zimbabwean offenders. In July 2003, for example, two Botswana men from Kgari village were apprehended by the police for flogging four Zimbabweans they suspected to have stolen a goat. During the same month, there were reports that a Tswana policeman and 17 people from Jackalas Number 2 village were charged with murder for killing a Zimbabwean man they suspected to be a thief (Morapedi 2007).

Some deaths of Zimbabweans in the rural areas of Botswana were reportedly linked to xenophobic sentiments among local communities. In October 2003, for instance, three Zimbabweans died in Tutume village, a few kilometres outside Francistown, in a case of suspected food poisoning by the local Botswana. The migrants died after taking a meal laced with rat poison (Tsiko, 3 February 2004).

This section has demonstrated how, with the backing of the national government, Botswana traditional leaders sought to reassert their authority amid various challenges during the new millennium characterised, among other things, by the increased influx of Zimbabweans fleeing the socio-economic crisis in their country. Many rural communities were also agitated as they felt that foreigners were depriving them of jobs and other basic resources as well as being responsible for the upsurge in the spread of diseases, crime and prostitution. In mobilising their people to engage in xenophobic reactions against the unprecedented presence of Zimbabwean



migrants, most traditional leaders capitalised on this widespread disgruntlement.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has examined the dynamics of xenophobic violence by Botswana traditional leaders and their rural communities against Zimbabwean migrants during the new millennium. The chapter has also shown that the Botswana national government contributed towards the xenophobic violence against Zimbabweans by, among other things, empowering traditional leaders to administer corporal punishment on undocumented immigrants. It has illuminated the contradictions between the rhetoric of tolerance and the reality of violent contestations (which sometimes assume xenophobic dimensions) among nationalities in the 21<sup>st</sup> century world. The new millennium has witnessed citizens of countries ravaged by socio-economic and political turmoil traversing borders to salvage sustenance in relatively stable environments. While considerable sections of the host population may initially be sympathetic and accommodative to the plight of immigrants, they gradually become agitated by their presence whenever the competition for increasingly shrinking resource bases escalates. The citizens of host countries who are severely threatened by such competitive environments tend to formulate ethnic/cultural collectives, which often assume violent xenophobic proportions, to assert belonging to, and ownership of, the state ahead of migrants in order to monopolise the access material and immaterial resources. Thus, the chapter has argued that xenophobic violence does not have firm ideological foundations but is strongly rooted in struggles over space. In such struggles, traditional institutions and ethnic collectives are sometimes mobilised and utilised as instruments in an attempt to exclude immigrant populations. It should be noted that conflict resolution in cross-border discourses becomes problematic in dispensations characterised by fierce competition over increasingly shrinking resources. This calls for generative global dialogue and decisive interventions by national governments, with the committed involvement of traditional leaders, to address the challenges posed by

transnational mobility and xenophobic reactions in the new millennium.

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### Problematism of Victimhood and Agency: Women and Terrorism in 21<sup>st</sup> Century

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#### Introduction

Terrorism in Africa in particular and the world in general has a long history. Throughout the world, terrorism and terrorist groups have grabbed the media headlines and have captured the attention of national governments, international organisations and ordinary people alike due to their violent and unconventional ways of airing grievances and discontent. Africa has not been spared from this unsettling development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Al-Qaeda, Al-Shabaab, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and Boko Haram have been some of the major terrorist groups operating in Africa. African countries have not only struggled against domestic terrorism, but have also been challenged by the emergence of transnational terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria/Levante (ISIS/L) that have used Africa as a theatre to carry out attacks against both domestic and international targets as well as develop and maintain operations (*Global Security*, 20 March 2016).

Al-Qaeda is an international Islamist extremist movement with many affiliates in various parts of the world, including Africa. In Africa, Al-Qaeda affiliates claim to seek the establishment of Islamic kingdoms administered by the *Sharia* law. Its operations in Africa began in 1998 with the formation of the Algerian Salafi Group for Call and Combat (GSPC), an Islamist group that was fighting the Algerian government. From its major bases in Algeria, the GSPC went on to expand its operations in North African countries such as Mali and Tunisia in an attempt to create an Islamic state. In 2005, the GSPC renamed itself Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). In 2011, AQIM split into various groups such as the Movement for Monotheism and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) and the Al-

Mourabitoun. MUJAO, for example, drew most of its members from Arab people in countries like Niger and Mauretania. The Sons of the Islamic Sahara Movement for Justice was formed as a splinter group from MUJAO and operates in northern Niger, western Libya and south-eastern Nigeria (*British Broadcasting Corporation*, 6 December 2013; Mullin, 20 November 2015; Nagesh, 21 November 2015).

The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), also known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levante (ISIL), is another terrorist organisation that is active in various parts of Africa, particularly from the second decade of the new millennium (*British Broadcasting Corporation News*, 2 August 2014; Jewish Virtual Library, 1 May 2016). It originated in 2004 as a branch of Al-Qaeda that was fighting the 2003 United States' invasion of Iraq to oust President Saddam Hussein (*The Week*, 21 November 2015). It was largely constituted by radical Sunni jihadists who fought under the banner of 'Al-Qaeda in Iraq' (Parry, 14 September 2014). From the time of Saddam Hussein's ouster, ISIS has been fighting the Western-backed government in Iraq. It also expanded its operations into Syria where it is simultaneously battling Syrian government forces and the international coalition against the Syrian government of Bashir al-Assad (*British Broadcasting Corporation News*, 2 August 2014; *IB Times*, 15 December 2015). Since the 2011 Arab Spring Revolution in North Africa that deposed most of the long-serving Heads of State in countries such as Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya and Egypt, ISIS began infiltrating the region in an attempt to oust 'westernised regimes' (Shiloach, 20 January 2016). In 2014, ISIS severed ties with Al-Qaeda (*IB Times*, 15 December 2015; Jewish Virtual Library, 1 May 2016). Since then, ISIS has extended its operations across the African continent. It claims to have authority over all Muslims in the world (Jewish Virtual Library, 1 May 2016). Among its stated goals is that it seeks to establish a global Islamic state that is free from the influences of Western countries, particularly the United States and Britain (Jewish Virtual Library, 1 May 2016; Parry, 20 September 2014; Wood, March 2015).

In East Africa, the Al-Shabaab, which has links with Al-Qaeda, strives to create an Islamic state in Somalia (*British Broadcasting Corporation News*, 3 April 2015). The Al-Shabaab, which derives its



name from the Arabic word meaning ‘The Youth,’ was formed in 2006 by Aden Hashi Ayro who had broken away from a Somali Islamist group known as Ittihad Islamiya that had been formed during the early 1990s. From around 2008, the Al-Shabaab began to work closely with Al-Qaeda and in the year 2012, the two organisations made a formal announcement that they had merged. Among other areas of cooperation, the two groups have trained together and jointly attacked various targets in countries such as Kenya and Ethiopia (Stanford University, 20 February 2016).

The LRA operates in northern Uganda as an ideologically apocalyptic Christian group that seeks to establish a regime based on the strict adherence to the biblical Ten Commandments (*Global Security*, 29 September 2015). It was formed by Alice Lakwena in 1986 as the Holy Spirit Movement to fight against the oppression of President Yoweri Museweni’s government in northern Uganda. When Alice Lakwena was forced into exile, Joseph Kony assumed leadership and renamed the organisation, the LRA (Invisible Children, 2014). The LRA managed to take advantage of the porous, weak and unpoliced borders to expand operations across multiple borders, namely into the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), South Sudan and the Central African Republic (*Global Security*, 29 September 2015).

Boko Haram, which is arguably “the most deadly terror organisation in the world” in 2016 (Gichoya, 2016: 1), was formed in the north-eastern Nigerian state of Borno in the year 2002 by Mohammed Yusuf. The group named itself after a Hausa word which means ‘Western Education is forbidden.’ It initially concentrated on opposing Western education before agitating for an Islamic state in north-eastern Nigeria. Boko Haram began launching military operations in the year 2009 and mainly operates from north-eastern Nigeria where it declared a caliphate (*British Broadcasting Corporation*, 18 May 2016). The organisation now refers to itself as the Islamic State’s West Africa Province (ISWA) (Weiss, 21 September 2015). During the period 2009-2014, Boko Haram killed over 13,000 people and displaced up to 1.5 million (Onuoha, 2014).

The major purpose of this present chapter is to investigate the role and place of women in the commission of terrorism in Africa.

The involvement of women as agents in terrorist activities across the globe is not a phenomenon exclusive to the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Cunningham, 2003). During the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, for example, women were active participants in Russian Nihilist organisations such as *Noradnaya Volya* (Gentry and Sjoberg, 2011). During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, women also played prominent roles in terrorist attacks carried out by the Shining Path Group in Peru, the Tamil Tigers of Eelam in Sri-Lanka, the Hamas in Palestine and the Taliban in Afghanistan (Agara, 2015). Female militants also played prominent roles in the Irish Republican Army, the Italian Red Brigade and Germany's Baader-Meinhof Group. Chechen rebels and the Taliban also deployed female terrorists (Dyer, 25 July 2014). Such active involvement of women in the aforementioned organisations falsifies the stereotyped portrayal of women as victims or as passive and non-violent beings in history (Qazi, 2001).

In Africa, there has been a notable increase in the involvement of women in terrorist operations during the new millennium. This chapter examines this increased involvement of women in terrorist operations in Africa during the new millennium, either as victims or, most importantly, as agents. It is a fact that many women and young girls have fallen victim to terrorist activities in a number of ways. Many women and young girls have lost their lives after being used as human shields by terrorist groups (Smith, 7 June 2012). In addition, young girls, in particular, have often been abducted and forcibly recruited as concubines, maids and suicide bombers by the largely male-dominated terrorist organisations (Barkindo and Tyavkase, 2013; Dallaire, 2010; Smith, 7 June 2012). Thus, the first sections of this chapter dwell considerably on the involvement of women and young girls as victims of terrorist operations. Among other issues, these initial sections interrogate the rationale behind the use of many women and young girls as suicide bombers.

Most importantly, the chapter delves further beyond the simplistic structuralist and feminist narratives most of which view women as passive victims of perennial patriarchal machinations. Thus, this chapter also focuses on women as agents in terrorist activities in Africa during the new millennium. Of note, the chapter explores how some women engaged in terrorist activities out of their

own volition in an attempt to pursue various agendas. This largely derives from the fact that in the past some widows, for example, became suicide bombers in order to avenge the deaths of their husbands at the hands of government forces. Some disgruntled mothers became terrorist operatives after their children had met the same fate. It is the central contention of this chapter, therefore, that women should not be viewed only as victims of terrorism in 21<sup>st</sup> century Africa, but also as agents as some of them sought to pursue their own agendas without necessarily being compelled to do so by men. This chapter further acknowledges that the escalation of terrorist activities during the new millennium to involve considerable numbers of women and young girls is a lamentable development. Thus, the last section explores some of the leading roles that women have played, and could partake, in countering terrorism in Africa.

This chapter is informed by a broad range of secondary sources such as published academic books and journal articles as well as electronic and print media sources, and the accounts of humanitarian organisations. Scholarly works were particularly illuminating on the gender dimensions of terrorism in Africa. The contemporary reports of humanitarian organisations as well as those from the print and electronic media were utilised in an attempt to capture the gender dynamics of terrorism in Africa, with particular reference to the involvement of women and girls as both victims and agents in terrorist activities.

### **Women and girls as victims of terrorism in 21<sup>st</sup> century Africa**

The growth of religious radicalism especially in North, West and East Africa has been accompanied by the victimisation of women and children by terrorist groups. Women and girls, in particular, have suffered a broad range of abuses at the hands of terrorist militants. While innocent women and girls have lost their lives during terrorist attacks, several others have been abducted and raped, among other abuses.

Reports abound of innocent women and children who have lost their lives during terrorist attacks. In December 2014, for example, Al-Shabaab militants kidnapped two women, a soldier's wife and a

cook for government troops, and chopped their heads off in Somalia's Tiye glow District (*Agence France-Presse*, 11 December 2014). On 13 March 2016, during an attack in which AQIM claimed responsibility, terrorist militants opened fire at the Grand-Bassam Beach Resort in Ivory Coast killing 18 people who included women and children. One observer, quoted by Miller (14 March 2016: 1), said: "They killed a child, despite him kneeling down and begging. They shot a woman in the chest...They have killed innocent people."

Women and girls also endure various forms of sexual and other abuses during terrorist attacks. During an Al-Shabaab attack at Mpeketoni in Kenya's Lamu County on 15 June 2014, for example, several women and girls were raped (Oketch, 28 January 2016). A man who witnessed the raid said, "When the attackers struck, they used bright torches to fish out men from their houses and killed them as they raped their wives and children" (Muchiri, 4 February 2016: 1). In early February 2016, the security forces in Kenya's Lamu County were on high alert after widespread reports indicated that Al-Shabaab militants were raiding villages along the border with Somalia and forcing women to feed them (Muchiri, 4 February 2016).

MUJAO is also notorious for forcing women to perform various tasks. This was revealed in June 2013 when French forces raided a MUJAO workshop in northern Mali where suicide bomber vests were made. They noted that most of the workers at the site were local women who had forcibly been recruited by the Al-Qaeda linked group to sew suicide bomber vests. A sample suicide vest and 18 sewing machines were found at the workshop (*British Broadcasting Corporation*, 14 June 2013).

During two decades spanning from the early 1990s, the LRA abducted more than 30 000 children from their homes in Uganda and some of them, aged as young as six years, were beaten, raped and forced to kill. More than 25%, about 8 000, of the abducted children were girls (Ellison, 29 May 2015).

In the north-eastern parts of Nigeria including Borno, Maiduguri and Kaduna, women and young girls were kidnapped by Boko Haram insurgents. Boko Haram became notorious for kidnapping civilians as a strategy of forcing the Nigerian government to concede to its demands for a separatist Islamic state (Zenn and Pearson,

2014). In February 2013, Boko Haram militants abducted a seven-member French family, which included four children, in Northern Cameroon and brought them to Nigeria (*The Guardian*, 19 April 2013). Between February 2013 and May 2013, the abductions intensified on Nigerian soil resulting in more than a dozen government officials and their families being detained at Boko Haram's main base of Borno (Zenn and Pearson, 2014). In May 2013, Boko Haram attacked a police camp at Bama in Borno State and captured 12 Christian women and children (Zenn, 2014).

On 14 April 2014, Boko Haram militants raided Chibok School and abducted 276 girls from their dormitories as they were about to write their examinations. Abubakar Shekau, the leader of Boko Haram, announced that the abductions were in retaliation to corresponding tactics by the Nigerian government which had detained more than 100 of his follower's wives and children. In particular, the group claimed that it was avenging the Nigerian government's alleged arrest and detention of the family members and wives of Boko Haram's prominent leaders during the years 2011 and 2012 (*Human Rights Watch News*, 29 November 2013).

The alleged detention of the wives of Boko Haram leaders by the Nigerian government and the abduction of women and girls in retaliation by the militants illustrates how women were often caught up in the crossfire and were used as trophies during struggles for power largely involving men. Both groups of women became victims as they were targeted for instrumental purposes, as none of those captured on either side had any direct involvement in the conflict (Zenn and Pearson, 2014). While the women abducted by Boko Haram at Bama were released several weeks later, only 57 of the Chibok school girls managed to escape and most of the remaining ones have not been seen since. It was only on 16 May 2016 that Amina Ali Nkeki, one of the Chibok girls was found in the dense Sambisa Forest in Nigeria, close to the border with Cameroon. She was the first to be rescued since their abduction in April 2014. She was rescued by the Civilian Joint Task Force (JTF), a vigilante unit that was formed in 2013 to assist the Nigerian army to fight the Boko Haram. At the time of her rescue, she had a baby and was also in the company of Mohammed Hayatu, her alleged Boko Haram 'husband.'

Hayatu was immediately arrested while Amina and her baby were taken to a hospital for medical attention (*British Broadcasting Corporation*, 18 May 2016). During an interview with Nigerian authorities, Amina stated that out of the Chibok girls who had been kidnapped in April 2014, six had died while 212 were still there in the Sambisa Forest (*British Broadcasting Corporation*, 18 May 2016).

The disappearance of these school girls brought immense psychological suffering to their parents, family members and communities. In addition to seeking to force the Nigerian government to the negotiating table, the kidnapping of school girls might also have been influenced by the extreme *Sharia* ideology followed by Boko Haram which strictly opposes the education of women along Western lines as noted earlier on in this chapter. Under this version of *Sharia* Law, women should be at home raising children and looking after their husbands (Duthiers *et al*, 2 May 2014). These abductions were gross human rights violations which not only deprived young girls of their right to education, but constituted gender-based violence of the highest order that negatively impacted on their psychosocial wellbeing.

In addition to the well-publicised abduction of the 276 school girls from Chibok, the Boko Haram is believed to have abducted as many as 2 000 women and children, both girls and boys, during the period 2012-2016 (Searcy, 7 April 2016). In most cases, the abduction of women and girls was accomplished after heavy fighting between the insurgents and government troops during which many lives were also lost. Many more women and girls were killed during such clashes. To this extent, the Boko Haram's assault on a police barrack in Bama in May 2013, as well as the abductions of 12 Christian women and children, for example, followed fierce battles with government security forces during which more than 100 people were killed (Duthiers *et al*, 2 May 2014; Zenn 2014). A study conducted on behalf of Nigeria's Political Violence Research Network during the year 2013 noted that more than 45% of people killed during Boko Haram's attacks in Nigeria were Christian women and children (Barkindo and Tyavkase, 2013).

The LRA also has a long history of abducting young girls and women. On 16 January 2008, for example, Esther, a young girl aged

15 years, was abducted by LRA militants from her home village of Loka in South Sudan. In August 2013, she narrated her ordeal:

I was at home when I saw one of the boys from our neighbourhood running towards me. He told me that the LRA were already in our village. Before the boy could finish talking, they were already in our compound. We ran for our lives but they chased us and caught up with me. The LRA had abducted 125 other children on the day they abducted me. They also forced me to watch as they killed my two other brothers. I tried escaping severally but was caught. Together, with one of the boys at Kony's home, I finally managed to escape on the night of March 28<sup>th</sup> 2011. We were in the Central African Republic and Kony had left for Congo to abduct more children. The soldiers who were there noticed that we had escaped. They followed us and shot at us. We also shot back...Fortunately; we survived and walked in the forest for one week until we found a village. We explained our situation to the villagers but instead, they attacked us with machetes sending us back into the forest where we were also attacked by the military from the Central African Republic (cited in Kolok, 15 August 2013: 1).

Esther and her companion were rescued by cattle-herders whom they met in the forest. She continued:

The cattle-keepers escorted us to the chief in the Central African Republic who then handed us over to the Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF). The UPDF took us and transported us to Obo in South Sudan where we received medical treatment for five days. We were then flown to Anzara. The boy remained with the UPDF since he was Ugandan while I was handed over to UNICEF (Kolok, 15 August 2013: 1).

Between July 2009 and February 2012, the LRA abducted 268 girls and 323 boys in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan and the Central African Republic (Smith, 7 June 2012).

The AQIM terrorist group is also notorious for kidnapping women and girls. In 2012, for example, the organisation kidnapped Beatrice Stockly, a Swiss Christian missionary woman in Mali and later released her during the same year on condition that she abandoned her evangelical work in the country. In January 2016, AQIM again abducted Stockley from her home in Timbuktu, Mali. Among the conditions listed by the abductees for her release were the freeing of AQIM leaders detained in Mali and the International Court in The Hague (*Agence France-Presse*, 27 January 2016). It now becomes apparent that women were often used as accessories by terrorists to force national governments and international governments to meet their demands, among other things.

In October 2011, MUJAO militants abducted three aid workers, comprising two women and one male, from Raguni Refugee Camp in the Tanduf Province of western Algeria. One of the kidnapped women was an Italian national (Rogio, 21 August 2013). The abduction of foreign nationals, particularly those from Europe and the United States, was meant to send a message to Western powers to stop interfering in the affairs of the Islamic world. Lamentably, as these examples show, women were instrumentalised by being held hostage in order to convey such messages.

ISIS also abducts women and girls in various parts of Africa. On 3 June 2015, for example, a group of Eritrean refugees, among them 12 women and children, was kidnapped in Libya by ISIS-affiliated militants. The vehicle which was carrying them was ambushed by the terrorists outside Tripoli. The militants reportedly separated the Christians from the Moslems before taking the former hostage (Tekle, 7 June 2015).

The abducted women and girls endure various forms of abuse at the hands of their terrorist captors. A study carried out in north-eastern Nigeria, for example, revealed that most of the women and girls kidnapped by Boko Haram were forcibly converted to Islam, raped and exposed to various forms of violence such as intimidation and beatings (Barkindo and Tyavkase, 2013). When Nigerian forces rescued some of the women and girls who had been abducted by Boko Haram in November 2013, they discovered that some of them were pregnant while others had had children with their captors after



being raped (Duthiers, 2 May 2014). As noted earlier on in this chapter, Amina Ali Nkeki, one of the Chibok girls abducted in April 2014, was rescued in May 2016 together with a baby while in the company of her alleged Boko Haram ‘husband’ (*British Broadcasting Corporation*, 18 May 2016).

Terrorist kidnappers often use captive women and girls for sexual gratification through sex slavery. More often than not, the captured women are raped and impregnated by their captors in order to create a new generation of terrorists that is raised within the rebel force to be fighters (McKay, 2005). Joseph Kony, the LRA leader, for instance, is reported to have swelled the membership of his organisation by fathering about 200 children with abducted women (Dallaire, 2010). The LRA forcibly married off abducted girls and women to its top leaders. It was also common practice for the captive girls and women to be forcibly remarried to other leaders after the men who were previously imposed upon them had died in battle or from natural causes (Dallaire, 2010). In a report presented to the United Nations Security Council in February 2012 cited by Smith (7 June 2012: 1), the United Nations Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, condemned such abuses of young boys and girls by LRA militants. He lamented:

Children reported that they were used in various capacities, as cooks, porters, guards, spies or directly in hostilities as combatants or human shields. Girls who spent a substantial period of time associated with the group reported to have been subject to sexual slavery and exploitation, including being forcibly married to combatants. Some children were forced to use violence, including killing their friends and other children in the armed group.

The Al-Shabaab also introduced “its version of widow inheritance (*dumaal*) for which all militants are brothers and therefore can marry the widows of fallen fellows. Neither a woman nor her family has a say” (Bilala, 13 August 2012: 1). In addition to the horrifying experiences encountered by such women and girls, these

abuses resulted in the prevalence of unwanted pregnancies and outbreaks of sexually transmitted diseases (Dallaire, 2010).

ISIS is also notorious for sexually abusing women and girls. The terror group has often embarked on organised rape of abducted women and girls. In fact, ISIS leaders instruct their militants “to rape women to make them Muslim” (Shubert and Naik, 8 October 2015: 1). These instructions to “rape women toward Allah” clearly reflect the “extraordinary manipulation of Islamic law” (Esman, 23 October 2015). In September 2015, Hassan al-Karami, the ISIS leader in Libya’s coastal city of Sirte, ordered parents to marry off their daughters to his terrorist fighters (*Express*, 7 September 2015). This order sought to:

...force mothers and fathers to hand over their young girls in the name of the jihad. Those who refuse could find themselves hauled before a *Sharia* court, with public floggings and even the death penalty amongst the punishments routinely handed over by ISIS militants (*Express*, 7 September 2015: 1).

The victimisation of the women captured by terrorists does not end with their escaping or being rescued. In fact, it continues to haunt them in their communities and in the future. In addition to being traumatised, many of the newly freed women and girls are often discriminated against by their local communities. In northern Nigeria, for example, the freed women and girls, many of whom had been raped by the militants, were often ostracised by their mainstream societies and labelled *annoba*, which means ‘diseased’ (Searcy, 16 February 2016). Considerable sections of the community also viewed most of the rescued women and girls with suspicion as Boko Haram informants. In addition, the children born after such women and girls had been raped during captivity were not readily accepted by their mothers’ family members. Such negative societal attitudes further aggravated the plight of the rescued women and girls. One of the freed girls who had been impregnated while in Boko Haram captivity expressed her dilemma as follows: “When I think of the baby that will come, it disturbs me a lot because I always ask

myself this question: will the child also behave like [the terrorists]?” (Searcy, 16 February 2016: 1).

In February 2012, Ban Ki-moon, the then United Nations Secretary General, cited by Smith (7 June 2012: 1), noted that stigmatisation was one of the major challenges faced by the female victims of sexual abuses perpetrated by LRA combatants, particularly those who escaped and returned to their communities with babies. He explained: “Families that take such LRA victims are often accused by their community of supporting the LRA and the girls or young women escaping LRA with babies are often seen as bringing bad luck.” Ban Ki-moon went further to cite an example from May 2011 in which three Congolese girls who had escaped from LRA captivity in South Sudan and rejoined their families in the Democratic Republic of Congo, were later forced to return to South Sudan after being ostracised by their local communities (Smith, 7 June 2012).

In Uganda, Ellison (15 December 2015) observed that some former LRA female captives struggled to survive after returning to their communities. Beatrice Lumunu, for example, was abducted by the LRA at the age of 11 years. When she escaped and returned to her village after a year, she was never able to go back to school because she now had a child to look after. In addition, she had health ailments that were associated with her forced marriage and early pregnancy while in captivity (Ellison, 15 December 2015).

Francois Delattre (28 March 2016: 1), the then French Permanent Representative to the United Nations Security Council, aptly summarised the hardships experienced by women and girls after terrorist captivity as follows:

Women who have suffered the violence of conflict are often marked by a considerable post-conflict stress: they bear the stigma of sexual violence. We must ensure that they are able to return to their societies and their communities of origin. That return is often violent. Husbands, families and the labour markets all reject them. Therefore, it is crucial that women who are liberated from these armed groups should enjoy- just like men or soldiers- disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programmes [...]. Without that proper rehabilitation, women will

remain marginalised and represent a gap in the rebuilding of societies.

It is in view of these challenges experienced after captivity that some national governments, international organisations and civil groups have initiated programmes to rehabilitate former victims of terrorism. On 27 and 28 November 2014, for example, the African Union (AU) Commission convened a symposium in Algiers, Algeria, to map out strategies of rehabilitating the victims of terrorist activities. The symposium was attended by some AU member states, regional economic communities, international organisations and African associations that represent the victims of terrorism. Among other things, the symposium explored ways in which the AU, national governments and civic organisations could work together in rehabilitating terror victims and countering terror in line with the United Nations Global Terrorism Strategy (Peace AU, 27 October 2014).

Other African countries also initiated rehabilitation programmes for former victims and combatants of terrorism. In 2015, for example, the Nigerian government empowered the Office of the National Security Advisor (NSA) to rehabilitate and ‘de-radicalise’ women and girls who were formerly abducted and forcibly enlisted as suicide bombers by Boko Haram. The NSA conducts the rehabilitation process under the Countering Violent Extremism Programme (CVE). The programme aims to reform former combatants and victims of terrorism and reintegrate them into the mainstream society (Umar and Agba, 1 July 2015). In Somalia, the government, with the support of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, also set up the Baidoa Reintegration Centre to rehabilitate former Al-Shabaab combatants and captives (United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, 5 May 2016).

This section has illustrated some of the tribulations which women and girls experience at the hands of terrorist organisations in some parts of the African continent. It has noted that some terrorist groups kidnap women and girls and exploit them in a number of ways. In addition, many of the captured women and girls are used as sex slaves by the militants resulting in unwanted pregnancies and the

prevalence of venereal diseases. Having been grossly abused and traumatised during their period of captivity, most of the women and girls who manage to flee or are lucky to be rescued are not readily accepted by their local communities. Hence they suffer both short term and long term effects of terrorism, and complex forms of victimisation.

### **Exploitation of women and girls as combatants in terrorist attacks**

This section discusses some cases where terrorist groups exploit females, particularly young girls, as combatants. It is quite apparent that the involvement of very young girls as terrorist assailants suggests their abduction and forced recruitment. As this section shows, some of them were too young to make independent decisions to join terrorist groups and organise terror attacks. In addition, as the previous section demonstrated, some children were born and bred by their mothers in terrorist captivity. Such children were raised in the bush, indoctrinated, often drugged and trained to fight by their terrorist fathers. In many cases, such young female victims become unwilling agents in combat as they seek to survive in environments characterised by insecurity and war. As noted by Ellison (29 May 2015: 1) on the position of such young girls in the LRA: “Contrary to the popularised image of the child soldier as a teenage boy gripping a Kalashnikov, female abductees also fought in the conflict, sometimes running into battle with their babies strapped to their backs.”

The exploitation of women and girls by terrorist groups can be noted in their use as suicide bombers. Internal videos from the Boko Haram camps also showed girls as young as seven years among the militants. From the young age of most of the girls, it stands to reason to agree with Zenn’s (2014) contention that most of these young females were compelled to carry out terrorist attacks. The Boko Haram reportedly runs camps to indoctrinate and train young female recruits (Weiss, 21 September 2015). In the year 2014, the terrorist group reportedly used four female suicide bombers with the youngest one being eight years old. During the year 2015, the number of young girls used as suicide bombers by the Boko Haram rose to 44 (Searcy,

12 April 2016). This sharp increase was a result of the forced recruitment of the girls abducted from Chibok School in April 2014 (*Clarion Project News*, 15 December 2014). In an incident at Maiduguri in north-eastern Nigeria on 10 January 2015, a 10-year-old girl, believed to have been forcibly recruited by the Boko Haram, detonated an explosive device that was tied to her body (Ngwa, 3 April 2015). On 24 June 2015, a 12-year-old girl killed 10 people after being sent to detonate an explosive at a market in Nigeria's Yobe State. On 17 July 2015, a 10-year-old girl and an elderly woman killed 50 people in separate suicide attacks in Damaturu, Nigeria. On 25 July 2015, a 12-year-old girl sent by the Boko Haram carried out a suicide bombing on a popular bar in Cameroon killing 20 people. During the month of July 2015, two girls sent by the terrorist group blew themselves up at a crowded market in Maroua, the capital of Cameroon's Far North Region, resulting in the death of more than 20 people. On 25 August 2015, a 14-year-old girl dispatched by the Boko Haram carried out a suicide attack on a bus terminus in Damaturu, Nigeria, killing five people. Early in September 2015, the terrorist group used two teenage girls to attack a market and a nearby army camp at Kerewa in Cameroon where 30 people were killed (Weiss, 21 September 2015).

Attacks carried out by girls as young as eight years old, point to the fact that most of them were not fully aware of their actions. Some reports of remote detonations of explosives planted on young girls also suggest that they did not know that they were being used as suicide bombers. In a number of cases, some terror architects planted explosives on young girls without their knowledge and detonated them using remote control devices as they did not trust that the youngsters had sufficient courage to carry out the attacks (Zenn, 2014).

The reasons why some women participated in acts of violence and terrorism are not widely researched but a general pattern that emerges is that both males and females are vulnerable to being coerced to participate in conflict for a variety of reasons unrelated to gender. These reasons include the desperate need for labour to sustain various terrorist operations. Joseph Kony's LRA rebels, for example, forced both boys and girls to perform support tasks within

the military bases such as raising crops, selling goods, preparing food, carrying loot, moving weapons and stealing food, livestock and seed stock (McKay, 2005).

In the case of the Boko Haram, a clear pattern of intimidation, violence and coercion is also discernible which has resulted in many women and girls unwillingly taking part in terrorist operations (Chowdhury *et al*, 2013). It was alleged that some of the Chibok schoolgirls kidnapped by Boko Haram militants in Nigeria during the year 2014 were drugged, brainwashed and indoctrinated after which they began fighting for the Islamist group, with many carrying out public beatings and even killings (Smith, 29 June 2015). After being forcibly recruited as combatants, the Chibok girls even administered punishments on behalf of the Boko Haram which included flogging young girls who were unable to recite some verses from the Qur'an (Smith, 29 June 2015).

It should be noted, however, that some captured girls refused to carry out orders on behalf of the terrorists. In February 2016, for example, one girl abducted by the Boko Haram, estimated to be in her late teens, refused to detonate an explosive device at a camp for displaced people near Maiduguri in north-eastern Nigeria after realising her parents among the inhabitants. The girl dumped the explosives in a nearby bush. The other girls exploded their devices killing 58 and injuring 78 others (Searcy, 16 February 2016).

Some women and girls who had been abducted and grossly abused were left with little option but to take part in the terrorist activities. For some girls, being raped and losing virginity was so demoralising that they lost any hope of being decently married in future (Poloni-Staudinger and Oatbals, 2013). For some Boko Haram female victims, the only option left was to take part in terrorist activities failure for which they risked being killed by the militants (Chowdhury *et al*, 2013). Some women who had been raped participated in terrorism in order to transform their status from being victims of sexual violence into feminist icons in their own right (Sutten, 2009).

The fact that most women and girls were forced to participate in terrorist activities is evidenced by their frequent attempts to escape from their captors whenever chances arose. Haija, a 19-year-old

Christian girl seized by Boko Haram in July 2013, for example, had a knife pressed on her throat and given a choice to convert to Islam or die. She spent three months as a slave of a Boko Haram unit made up of 14 men, cooking and cleaning for them. However, when she got the chance, she escaped from her captors (*Nigeria News*, 18 November 2013).

Even though some scholars such as Stohl (2003) have dismissed the argument that some terrorists are mentally ill people who are always prepared to fight for a cause at any cost, there is evidence that some terror groups make use of mentally-challenged women in suicide bombings. On 25 July 2015, for instance, a 40-year-old woman believed to be mentally unstable was utilised by Boko Haram to detonate herself in a crowded market in Damaturu, Nigeria, killing 14 people (Weiss, 21 September 2015).

The rationale of using female suicide bombers hinges on various factors. Strange men or boys, for example, attract much suspicion and attention. In contrast, women and girls do not raise such suspicion and can easily enter various places without attracting much attention (*Human Rights Watch News*, 29 November 2013). In addition, the use of the *hijab* dress by Muslim women in Nigeria can be exploited as a convenient means of hiding and conveying explosives. In June 2013, for example, an AK47 rifle, a pistol and improvised explosive devices were found hidden in the garments of two veiled women at Maiduguru in north-eastern Nigeria. Two months later, two women who had concealed rifles in their clothing were among the five suspected Boko Haram militants who were arrested by Nigerian security forces (*Guardian Nigeria*, 12 August 2013). On 27 July 2014, a teenage girl with an explosive device hidden under her veil detonated her bomb at a university campus in Kano, Nigeria, injuring five policemen (Weiss, 21 September 2015). Even male Boko Haram members reportedly disguised themselves as veiled women in order to evade arrest. In July 2013, three men dressed as veiled women were killed as they attempted to attack a police station in northern Nigeria (Zenn and Pearson, 2014).

Terrorist organisations also kidnap women and utilise them as suicide bombers because the largely male-dominated national armies cannot conduct thorough searches on the bodies of women as this



constitutes indecent assault and sexual abuse in legal terms (Zenn, 2014). It is also taboo in Islam for men to touch female bodies in public places (Monroe-Hamilton, 22 December 2015). In addition, concealed weapons on a woman's body can be mistaken for a pregnancy or big breasts (Cunningham 2003; Llevbare, 6 August 2014). Thus, in most societies, men are subjected to more thorough searches than women (O'Rourke, 2009).

Terrorist groups also employ significant numbers of female suicide bombers so as to capture international headlines in order to generate greater attention to their cause. According to Davis (2006), terrorist attacks by women garner significantly more attention at home and abroad. Such attacks by women often shock global conscience and invoke emotional responses from the world at large which have the potential of persuading national governments to institute measures to address the concerns of terrorist groups (Bradford and Wilson, 2013).

This section has illustrated how female bodies sometimes become both battlefields and weapons in the broad range of strategies employed by terrorist organisations. The section has also demonstrated how women are often victimised and exploited during terror attacks. It should be noted, however, that some women voluntarily participate in terrorist operations in order to fulfil various agendas. Thus, as the next section shows, women are not always victims but sometimes agents in terrorist activities.

### **Voluntary participation of women in terrorist activities**

As the previous section has articulated, many women and girls were forced to take part in terrorist activities. It is, however, imperative to note that even though they were often victimised, abused and exploited by terrorist organisations, most women are rational beings. To ascribe all their participatory roles in terrorism to patriarchal machinations is to deny them their voice and agency in history. The support for, and participation in, terrorist pursuits by some women should also be viewed in the context of their personal convictions and experiences (Ni Aolain, 2013). Commenting on the agency of women in terrorism in 21<sup>st</sup> century Africa, Gichoya (2016:

1) stated: “The role of women in violent extremism has grown in tandem with the spiralling threat of terrorism globally.”

Chowdhury *et al* (2013) explain that most of the factors that prompt men to become terrorists often drive women in the same way. Some scholars have therefore advanced the reasons why men and women alike take part in terrorist activities. Crenshaw (1992), for example, proposed the Rational Choice Theory which views the participation of some people in terrorism to be the result of a rational, conscious and calculated decision to achieve concrete goals which may be political and material, among other things. Thus, some men and women may engage in terrorism as a result of grievances related to socio-economic and political conditions (Ibid). Indeed, some impoverished and downtrodden men and women voluntarily engage in terror attacks with the hope of obtaining material benefits. In her study of terrorism in Somalia, Bilal (18 August 2012) noted that significant numbers of poor women and girls were lured to join Al-Shabaab after being promised humanitarian aid by the militants. This was not surprising, given the high poverty levels in Somalia which, among other things, resulted in only 30% of girls attending school in 2011 (*Humanium*, 6 October 2011). The generally lower educational standards and the relatively high poverty levels among girls and women create a fertile breeding ground for recruiting terrorist militants. For some militants, males and females alike, therefore, terrorism is an instrument to gain access to material resources.

Psychological theories have also been suggested to explain why some women and girls voluntarily joined terrorist organisations. Crenshaw (1981), for example, dwells considerably on the psychological motivations of terrorism. Without downplaying the importance of the Rational Choice Theory in given contexts, she pays particular attention to the centrality of group dynamics in the processes of radicalisation and recruitment in terrorism. She argued that some women may join terrorist groups as a result of psychological stress and low self-esteem emanating from oppression and poverty. Thus, there can be a close link between one's rational decision to obtain material resources and the psychological quest for self-fulfilment and a peace of mind by engaging in terrorism. In her

study of Al-Shabaab female militants in Somalia, Bilala (18 August 2012: 1) articulated this connection:

The diverse propaganda tactics, including using humanitarian aid, social media and mosque outreach as recruitment tools, have a common denominator targeting the disadvantaged. Once enrolled, the 'Jihad Janes' are trained, hold key roles from fundraisers, cooks to intelligence officers and even have the option to become suicide bombers. They are no longer nurturers but fierce combatants who at times can be crueller than their counterparts, mostly driven by the desire to be respected by their peers...Using emancipation as the main motivation for enrolment seems rather too simplistic, and deeper issues, especially violence against women, leave them deprived of other options. The pictures of women armed with weapons supposedly suggesting self-empowerment are certainly smoke and mirrors.

Thus, psychological stress and frustrations emanating from poverty and other socio-economic hardships can motivate some women, both young and aged, to join terrorist organisations. In May 2016, for instance, Gloria Kavaya Iqra, a 19-year-old first-year female Microbiology student at Kenyatta University in Kenya, faced charges of intending to join ISIS. Police investigations revealed that she had converted to Islam in October 2015 after her family had neglected her. She then abandoned her university studies in February 2016. She left Kenya and crossed into Somalia with the intention of travelling to Syria to join ISIS. Kenyan police noted that an unidentified agent had promised that ISIS would avail money for her to complete studies at the International University of Africa in Sudan. She was arrested in Somalia before leaving for Syria (*News 24*, 10 May 2016).

Some psychological motivations of terrorism relate to emotions that arise as a result of some oppressive policies and practices of national governments. According to Crenshaw (2002; 2007), government reactions may motivate some sections of the society into terrorism in order to revenge on the persecution of close relations and acquaintances. She asserts that the emotional urge for vengeance through terrorism may actually take precedence over instrumental

calculations. Elsewhere outside the African continent, in Russia's North Caucasus Region, for example, jihadists reportedly enlisted the services of 'Black Widows' whose husbands had died while fighting Russian troops (Weiss, 21 September 2015). Llevbare (6 August 2014: 1), a Nigerian scholar, also indicated that some of the Boko Haram female militants were the "wives and children of slain or arrested members of the Islamic sect who intend to take revenge on their husbands or loved ones." These sentiments point to the fact that all the so-called terrorists should not be collectively branded as bestial sycophants; some of them, males and females alike, are rational beings who have familial attachments and emotions.

Al-Shabaab activities clearly illustrate the involvement of widows in terrorist operations. Samantha Lewthwaite, the widow of a slain Al-Shabaab militant, for example, is a prominent figure in the terrorist group with titles such as 'Mother of Holy War' and 'Warrior Lady.' She recruits female militants, mostly widows of Al-Shabaab operatives. She reportedly disguises herself as a nomadic woman who travels undercover with camels and goats, which makes it difficult for government forces to trace her. Lewthwaite allegedly masterminded the terror attacks in Kenya at the Westgate Shopping Mall in September 2013, killing 67 people, and at the Garissa University College in April 2015 where 148 people lost their lives. At the age of 31 in 2015, she was believed to command an Al-Shabaab intelligence unit of 200 women, mostly widows of slain terrorists. Reports indicated that this female intelligence unit is based in Somalia and regularly crosses into Kenya. The operations of the female spies involve gathering information in Somali government circles while posing as tea shop-owners, street vendors and hotel workers. On 20 February 2015, Lui Ahmed, an Al-Shabaab female militant believed to have been trained by Lewthwaite, blew herself up at the Central Hotel in Mogadishu, killing 28 people, after disguising herself as a receptionist. The attack targeted senior Somali government officials and politicians who were at the hotel for a meeting (Mwarura, 1 August 2015).

Some women and girls participate in terrorist activities for religious reasons. The attack launched at Cafe Cappuccino in Burkina Faso's capital of Ouagadougou on 15 January 2016 by an AQIM

contingent comprising male and female combatants, for example, was largely motivated by religious grievances pertaining to the perceived negative influences on Moslems by Western powers, particularly France. Among the four AQIM militants who were killed during the attack were two women. The terrorist group announced that the attack was in response to French intervention in West Africa which had led to the deaths of many Muslims (Gongo and Bax, 16 January 2016). An AQIM statement released online stated that the assault was “a new message from the heroic champions of Islam, with their blood and their bodies, to the slaves of the cross, the occupiers of our homes, the looters of our wealth, and who would undermine our security” (*Christianity Today*, 19 January 2016: 1).

In early May 2016, Batula, a former Al-Shabaab female combatant, also explained how, at the age of 23 years, she joined the organisation for religious reasons. She said: “I loved Al-Shabaab and I used to respect them very much because if someone invoking religion asks you to do something for the sake of God, you will definitely do it” (United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, 5 May 2016: 1).

At this point, it is also important to note that there is a close relationship between religious and psychological motivations of terrorism. Given their lower social status in most cultures, some women and girls are readily forthcoming in pursuits of jihad martyrdom. To some of them, martyrdom of females attracts higher shock value and much media coverage as compared to that of men (Llevbare, 6 August 2014). Thus, for some Muslim women, their participation in terror attacks affords them an equal psychological and social standing as men by attaining the prestigious “entitlement as Jihadists” (Bilala, 18 August 2012:1). This partly explains why hundreds of women were trained on a daily basis in Somalia at Al-Shabaab camps such as Kamboni and Marka “in the quest of the so-called martyrdom” (Bilala, 18 August 2012: 1). Similarly, in Palestine since 2002, the Martyrs Brigade has carried out martyrdom attacks with young girls against Israel (Llevbare, 6 August 2014). In his study of the involvement of girls in suicide attacks in West Africa, Llevbare (6 August 2014: 1) noted:

These girls have drifted from the naiveté and demureness of their age groups to the savagery of rebels. The perplexing rise of homicide-bombers is attributable to a culture of the glorification of martyrdom in terrorist groups. Radical mothers are encouraged to compel their children to enlist in the struggles against enemies of the nation of Islam and die as martyrs in the name of Allah...In relation to their low social status in some societies, they are...willing casualty of latest jihad trend...When a bomb mission is accomplished, it attracts higher shock value and more media coverage if it involves a female martyr. They have earned the dubious distinction of appearing more newsworthy than their male counterparts...As a motivating factor, suicide-homicide is perceived as a way to achieve equal social status with men.

While the narratives of poor, uneducated and unemployed men and women, young and adult alike, joining terrorism have dominated media reports, the increasing involvement of the relatively educated and well-to-do people provokes further debate. In March 2015, for example, three female university students, two Kenyans and a Tanzanian, appeared before the Mombasa Law Court's Resident Magistrate facing charges of conniving to join terror groups in Syria and Iraq. One of the Kenyan students was at Mount Kenya University while the other attended Mombasa's Burhaniya College. The 21-year-old Tanzanian was a medical student at the University of Khartoum in Sudan. The charges arose after the police intercepted their communication by email and mobile phones (Mwarura, 1 August 2015).

In a related development in July 2015, Twafiq and Swala, both 20-year-old Kenyan female university students, abandoned their studies to join ISIS in Syria. Twafiq was at the University of Nairobi while Swala was a second-year education student at Kenyatta University. Having vanished for days, the two young women later sent messages to their worried relatives that they were in Syria where they had joined ISIS (Ibid).

While a number of reasons, some of them religious, have been suggested to explain why some educated and relatively well-to-do people, particularly youngsters, join terrorist organisations, the propaganda campaigns launched by terror groups seem to have

played a major recruitment role. Most of the online recruitment drives by terror groups promise younger generations leisure, adventure as well as a bright and prosperous future. As Professor Anne Aly, quoted by Mwarura (1 August 2015: 1), noted: “Women are lured by the promise of a politically and religiously pure Islamic society. Some are also attracted by the promise of adventure.” In addition, most online postings promise recruits monthly salaries, food, shelter, security, luxurious lives and spiritual rewards. Most propaganda postings encourage young women to marry jihadists and contribute to the creation of a new society of their own. The provision of transport costs for recruits travelling from various parts of the world, which ISIS often does, gives a lot of credibility to such promises (Ibid).

Thus, even some young schoolgirls voluntarily joined terrorist groups after being lured on the internet about lucrative lives as ‘jihad brides.’ In April 2015, for example, a 15-year-old schoolgirl disappeared from her grandmother’s home in Cape Town, South Africa. A few days later, the South African police pulled her out of a British Airways plane bound for Johannesburg from where she intended to fly to Turkey and later on cross into Syria to join ISIS. Reporting on the incident, David Mahlobo, South Africa’s State Security Minister, said: “We can confirm that she was planning to leave the country with the intention of joining ISIS and had been actively engaged with social media networks...” (Cited in *The Mail and Guardian*, 7 April 2015: 1).

Some women, therefore, voluntarily play significant roles as agents in terrorist organisations in Africa for a variety of reasons. Some even operate as combatants across national borders where they carry out terrorist attacks. On 21 September 2015, in the northern Cameroonian town of Mora, for instance, a police officer and two civilians were killed after two Boko Haram female suicide bombers from north-eastern Nigeria exploded themselves in a car near the town’s stadium (Weiss, 21 September 2015).

For some women who took part in various terrorist activities, there is no evidence to prove that they were necessarily compelled to do so, or closely supervised, by men. A deadly Al-Shabaab terror attack in Mogadishu, Somalia, during April 2012 which killed 10

people, for example, was carried out by an elderly woman (Bilala, 18 August 2012). On 8 June 2014, a middle-aged Boko Haram female suicide bomber riding a motorcycle detonated near the Nigerian military barrack of Gombe killing one policeman (Weiss, 21 September 2015). On 27 November 2014, two Boko Haram women killed 78 people and wounded several others when they detonated a bomb at a market in Maiduguri in north-eastern Nigeria (Ibid).

In the operations of ISIS in Africa, women also play significant roles as combatants. In March 2016, ISIS was reportedly engaging women in combat duties and suicide bombing missions in Libya. Hussein al-Thwadi, the Mayor of Sabratha, Libya, cited by Daftari (1 March 2016: 1), confirmed this development: “The women mostly handle the logistics of the battle but they are also fighting.” In early March 2016, three ISIS female combatants were killed by Libyan government forces in Sabratha while fighting alongside their male counterparts (Ibid).

Some women also undertake critical administrative roles in terrorist organisations. As noted earlier on in this chapter, the Holy Spirit Movement, which was later renamed the LRA, was formed in northern Uganda in 1986 by Alice Lakwena, a woman. It was only after Alice Lakwena had been exiled by the Ugandan government that Joseph Kony assumed the leadership of the terrorist organisation and renamed it the LRA (Invisible Children, 2014).

Some women stationed in various parts of the world also raise funds for terrorist groups in Africa. In late July 2014, for example, the United States Federal Bureau of Investigations arrested three women: one in Washington State, another in Northern Virginia, and the third in the Netherlands, on charges of fundraising for Al-Shabaab militants in Somalia (Dyer, 25 July 2014; Johns, 24 July 2014). There was no evidence mustered that suggested that these Al-Shabaab female agents who operated in various parts of the world were coerced to fundraise by a central patriarchal administration.

In June 2014, Nigerian troops arrested three women suspected to be Boko Haram members for secretly recruiting girls for the terrorist group (Onuoha and George, 17 March 2015). In January 2016, four female members of Al-Shabbab appeared before a Magistrates’ Court in Nairobi, facing charges of plotting to carry out



terror attacks in Kenya. The women were Ummulkheir Sadri Abdalla, Khadija Abubakar Abdulkadir Maryam Said Aboud and Halima Adan. Police investigations revealed that on 26 March 2015, the four women convened a meeting in Nairobi County where they planned to cross into Somalia to support Al-Shabaab. The police also established that the women arranged to carry out terror attacks within Kenya (Ocharo, 29 January 2016).

This section has illustrated how some women become agents in terrorist operations in Africa during the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It has noted how some women join terrorist organisations out of their own volition for various reasons without necessarily being compelled by men. Within various terrorist organisations, such women played, and continue to play, various pivotal roles. Thus, women should not only be viewed as victims of terrorist activities, but also as agents depending on the prevailing circumstances.

### **Some insights into the role of women as agents in countering terrorism in Africa**

Women can also play pivotal roles in anti-terror pursuits. The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 of the year 2000 acknowledged the powerful contribution that women can make in countering terrorism (*Africa Day*, 2016). The traditional roles ascribed to mothers of caring for, and nurturing, children can be exploited to empower women to be critical stakeholders in formulating and implementing policies and programs that address the scourge of violent radicalisation and terrorism. Within families, women's traditional roles allow them to shape familial and social norms and foster increased tolerance and non-violent political and civic engagement (Chowdhury *et al*, 2013). From the grassroots, they may yield emotive influence within families and communities, and their voices may be especially compelling when they speak out against terrorism. In essence, what Africa needs are female role models who can spearhead the fight against terrorism (Ngwa, 3 April 2013). As Delattre (28 March 2016: 1) suggested to the United Nations Security Council:

Women are not just victims of terrorist groups; they have multiple roles to play. I am convinced that the [United Nations] Women and Peace and Security Agenda must be fully integrated into counter-terrorism strategies. The fight against terrorism and violent extremism is a common undertaking and, to be effective, no stakeholder should be neglected. Women are an integral part of the fight against terrorism and it is essential to provide them with the necessary means to play their parts.

These sentiments were echoed by *Africa Day* (2016:1):

Mothers are instrumental in all societies ... The traditional role assigned to them in many societies is that of wife, mother and nurturer; they have the power to be upholders of social, cultural and religious values. Many women do not realise the great impact that this has on future generations, they have the power to either transmit ideas that can glorify martyrdom and terrorism, or can be powerful preventers of radicalism and encourage tolerance and non-violent political and civil engagement. Women can be a particularly effective voice as they are at the heart of their families and communities...They have emotional influence within their immediate families and sometimes even within their community as a whole.

An example of a woman who played a significant role in this regard can be drawn from Pakistan where Malala Yousafzai, a female victim of terrorism, became an icon in the fight for access to education for every girl (Ngwa, 3 April 2013). Another example comes from the case of a female air pilot, Major Miriam Mansouri, in the United Arab Emirates, who led the airstrikes against the ISIS in the year 2014 (Ibid). In Africa, yet another example can be drawn from Somalia where, in an attempt to sensitise women and girls from taking part in terrorist activities, the government appointed a female military commander to head the country's counter-terrorism initiatives in 2011 (*Newsweek*, 28 February 2016).

There is urgent need for African women to emerge from the abyss of victimhood and join their male counterparts in the struggle against terror (Ngwa, 3 April 2015). In Liberia, for example, the

Liberian Peace Movement, which was formed by Leymah Gbowee, a woman, mobilised thousands of women to protest against the atrocities of the Liberian Civil War. The movement advocated for non-violent conflict resolution initiatives (Wulan, 2015).

Similarly, on 27 January 2016, close to 100 women marched along the streets in Somalia demonstrating against an Al-Shabaab attack on a Mogadishu restaurant on 21 January 2016 during which 19 people were killed. Fatima Ali Hassan, one of the Muslim female protestors, said, “We are here to show our support [for] and mourn the death of innocent civilians killed here. We insist that our enemy cannot win” (Boh, 28 January 2016: 1). These sentiments were reiterated by Batula Sheikh Ahmed, the President of the Association of Somali Women, who averred that: “Everybody should show support to the children, foetus, pregnant women and graduates who were killed” (Ibid).

As past events have shown, women in Africa in particular and the world in general can also set aside their religious and other differences in order to combat terrorism. In December 2015, for example, a group of Muslim women shielded passengers, mostly Christian women, when Al-Shabaab militants attacked a bus in Kenya. Annie-Rose Ramos (22 December 2015: 1), a *Cable News Network* journalist, narrated this dramatic incident:

Al-Shabaab regularly storms buses... [They] launch a raid, single out Christians, and spray them with bullets...The Muslim passengers, who were mostly women, told the Islamic militants to kill them all or leave them alone.

At the national and international levels, women have also sought to combat terrorism by forming civil organisations. In 2002, for example, Edit Schlaffer founded Women Without Borders (WWB), an international organisation headquartered in Austria, with the aim of enhancing the role of women as agents of change and driving forces to stabilise the insecure world. In 2008, Schlaffer also formed the Sisters Against Violent Extremism (SAVE). Among other things, the organisation seeks to provide mothers with the skills of safeguarding their families against the threats of terrorism. It also mobilises victims, survivors and perpetrators of terrorism from

various parts of the world in an attempt to find peaceful solutions to conflicts (WWB, 2016). Schlaffer, cited by WWB (2016: 1), emphasised the role that women can play in countering terrorism when she said:

Including women in the security arena is a great challenge, but times of crisis are often times of opportunity. This is our moment as women to exercise our smart power and meet global challenges with competence and confidence.

In East Africa, the Women in International Security Global-Horn of Africa was formed as an affiliate of the Women in International Security Global (WIIS), a group that seeks to advance the role of women in peace and security issues. It also stresses the importance of women's partnerships with men in countering terrorism. The WIIS- Horn of Africa has its headquarters in Kenya and strives to create peaceful cross-border interactions among neighbouring countries such as Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia, Tanzania and Kenya (Women in International Security Global, 2016).

In Kenya, Fauziya Abdi Abdi, a woman activist, formed the Sisters Without Borders in 2014. It is a platform comprising women from various civil society groups. Its major objective is to empower women in Kenya to play leading roles in combating violent extremism (Ibid).

In Libya, Zahra Langhi formed the Libyan Women's Platform for Peace in an effort to counter the upsurge of terrorist activities in the country. In February 2015, for example, the organisation convened a two-day conference for Libyans of diverse backgrounds to strategise on ways of addressing the problem of terrorism (Karama Rising for Dignity, 13 March 2015).

National governments can also complement the efforts of such anti-terrorist organisations by instituting gender equity policy measures that uplift the living conditions of women and girls to discourage them from joining terror groups. As noted earlier on in this chapter, some disempowered and impoverished women and girls join terrorist groups out of frustration. Thus, the voluntary participation of women and girls in terrorist operations can partly be

mitigated by, among other things, availing more educational, economic and other developmental opportunities for them (Couture, 2014). In the words of Kofi Annan, the former Secretary General of the United Nations, “There is no development strategy more beneficial to society as a whole, men and women alike, than the one which involves women as central players (Ford, 2014: 1).

Women and girls can therefore play pivotal roles as agents in combating terrorism. It should be noted, however, that their counter-terrorism pursuits cannot effectively be accomplished without the support of various stakeholders. Thus, the complementary roles of men, national governments, civic groups and the international community are critical.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter problematised the victimhood and agency of women in the context of terrorism in 21<sup>st</sup> century Africa. It has noted how women have increasingly become visible as both victims and agents in terrorist activities in Africa. The chapter began with an exploration of the ways in which women and girls were victimised by terror groups. Among other abuses, they were abducted, raped, forcibly recruited into terrorist armies and denied religious freedom. While acknowledging the victimisation of women, the chapter went further to explore the agency of some women in terror groups out of their own volition. Finally, the chapter further explored the ways in which women increasingly became, or can become, agents in counter terrorism pursuits. This chapter has therefore employed a multi-dimensional approach in examining the relationship between women and terrorism in Africa.

Most importantly, the chapter has illuminated the complex nature and contextual fluidity in the relationship between women and terrorism in 21<sup>st</sup> century Africa. It is lamentable that some women and girls were subjected to a broad range of abuses at the hands of terrorist organisations. On the contrary, some women and girls became terrorist operatives in an attempt to fulfil their material and non-material needs depending on prevailing circumstances without necessarily being commandeered by men to do so. Despite this

paradox, this chapter has illustrated how some women have, or can, become agents in counter-terrorism initiatives.

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### The Order of Things: Changing Identities in Eritrea through ICTs

*Mirjam van Reisen and Zecarias Gerrima<sup>11</sup>*

#### Introduction: The ‘Order of Things’ revisited

*‘Eritrea’ is an old name used in old Greek texts to refer to the area land on the south-western shores of the Red Sea. Ancient Greek mariners called the Red Sea Erythra Thalassa, and the Romans called it Mare Rubrum or Mare Erythraeum, from which the Italians named the adjacent lands when they came as colonizers in the late 19th century. Prophetesses (sibyls) have been depicted in religious narratives as linked to the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. These are portrayed in marble engravings on the floor in the Cathedral in Sienna, which is consecrated to the holy Madonna. The engravings depict the sibyls (prophetesses), including the Egyptian Sybil, the Libyan Sybil and the Eritrean Sybil. The Eritrean Sybil is the ‘Prophetess of Redemption’ and is represented as a country woman: “From the high habitation of heaven, God has looked down on his humble servants.”) The word goes and the Cuman Sybil speaks: “The virgin now returns. He shall be born out of a Hebrew Virgin.” The Eritrean Sybil continues with her proclamation: “And it shall come to pass. Until the End of Time.” The Eritrean prophetess stands for nativity – the new beginning is what she offers*

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<https://www.tilburguniversity.edu/about/schools/humanities/dcu/gaic-network/>. We thank Prof Dr Mawere, Prof Dr Jaap van den Herik and Gertjan van Stam for their excellent comments on this chapter. We would like to thank Susan Sellars-Shrestha for the excellent editing. I thank Misha Stocker for his editorial support. A note on the editing. Given the political sensitivities all names (in places deemed necessary) are anonymised to protect the authors/writers on social media. Screenshots of all the original posts are available with the author.

*to the world. The promise of a new life* (Caciorgna, M. and Huerrini, R. 2013).<sup>12</sup>

In his book: *The Order of Things*, Foucault (1971)<sup>13</sup> analyses the experience of order as it defines a culture. “In every culture,” he writes, “between the use of what one might call the ordering codes and reflections upon order itself, there is the pure experience of order and of its modes of being.”<sup>14</sup> Since the publication of his book in 1966, the order of things has undergone fundamental changes, as the Internet, e-mail and mobile communication have created a new ‘globalized order’ in which information is shared across borders, across natural boundaries, and between cultures and language groups (Warnier: 2005, 2007).

The problem that Foucault grapples with is elaborated in 1991 in Benedict Anderson’s ‘Imagined Communities’<sup>15</sup> (1991), which discusses the relationship between thought, identity and bounded geographies (or bordered territories). The concept of bordered territories as a basis for identity is increasingly challenged by mobility, migration, conviviality and low cost. It is also challenged by International Communication Technology (ICTs) - that dwell across borders. The question that arises is: To what extent does the new order of things in this global representation still reflect an ‘imagined community?’ Identity is defined here as the idiosyncrasies of a person, or the qualities of a person or group that make them different from others.”<sup>16</sup> From Anderson’s conceptualisation, we note that identity is ideally understood as a dynamic, relational and agentic process in which people interpret and give a meaning to their context and how they belong to it.

Departing from Foucault’s analysis<sup>17</sup>, this chapter examines how political-cultural national identities are negotiated in today’s ICT-

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<sup>12</sup> Caciorgna, Marilena and Huerrini, Roberto (2013).

<sup>13</sup> First published in 1966 as ‘Les Mots et les Choses’ (published by Gallimard).

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p xxiii

<sup>15</sup> Anderson, B.(1991)

<sup>16</sup> Cambridge University Press (2016) *Cambridge Dictionaries Online: ‘Identity’*. <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/identity> (accessed 12 june 2016).

<sup>17</sup> Foucault, M (1971)



facilitated globalized society, what McLuhan (1960) call the “global village”. The impact of ICT on social change in Africa has been studied (Nyamnjoh, 2009a, b).<sup>18</sup> This study proposes to identify the impact of ICT on the identity of nationhood itself. The study hypothesises that the impact of ICT is more profound than just a socio-political change, but acts at a deeper level, creating globalised national identities.

A new order of things is analysed using Eritrean identities of nationhood as a case study. This chapter investigates the Eritrean identities and how these have changed in the 25 years since Eritrea gained independence from Ethiopia in 1991, after the 30-year war has ended. It specifically seeks to identify the role of ICTs in the process of altering the Eritrean identities. We suggest that the narratives that support these identities are expanding in an area of contested claim-making. Having been previously linked to a Westphalian claim underpinning the idea of the state of Eritrea that connects Eritreans to a bordered land, the link between Eritrean identities and the state is no longer the only dominant narrative as other new forms of identities have emerged over the years. This chapter seeks to identify how ICTs facilitate the emergence of new identities and how these are no longer imagined as narrowly based in the Westphalian order of the nation-state.

As a starting point, the chapter explores the desired framing of Eritrean identity by the Eritrean government, as expressed in the speech by President Isaias Afwerki (2016) during the celebration of Eritrea’s 25-years of independence. The idea of Eritrean identity is then compared to the identities that are emerging on the internet and social media, with particular reference to Facebook, Skype, WhatsApp, Youtube and Twitter. The robust identity frames Eritrea as a nation and defines Eritrean citizenship. It is an identity negotiated through the experience of the 30-year war; a history that has a stronghold over the imagined *raison d’être* of the country,

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<sup>18</sup> The impact of ICT as an accelerator of social-political change has already been studied, especially in the context of the Arab Spring. For instance in the ‘Project for Information Technology and Political Islam’. See: <http://www.washington.edu/news/2011/09/12/new-study-quantifies-use-of-social-media-in-arab-spring/>

which is questioned in this chapter. However, since Eritrea's independence, a number of events have occurred that have challenged this shared perception of the basis for Eritrea's existence as a nation and not a nation-state.<sup>19</sup> The chapter argues that, in the last five years, the acceleration of events has shaken the common understanding of what it means to be Eritrean. It is noted in this chapter that the acceleration has been facilitated by ICTs.

Eritrea is an example of competing images of historically informed, culturally-related identities in a globalizing society. The current confusion about Eritrean identities has led to fearful contestations of space, both in real life and on the Internet.<sup>20</sup> The ICT-facilitated sharing of traumatic experiences of Eritreans around the globe has evoked a 'collective trauma,' which has deeply divided Eritreans into two major groups with different understanding of their own identities. The sharing of extremely traumatizing experiences and the presence of deep-rooted insecurity and danger (within Eritrea and abroad for anyone opposing the regime's definition of identity) heightens the stakes for the different narratives on Eritrean identities. This is all the more important as the question of Eritrean identity is now an existential question cascaded in tangles of tantalizing processes for those involved.

When this chapter was written, tens of thousands of Eritrean refugees were adrift. The United Nations (UN) estimates that 5.000 Eritreans are leaving their country every month. Hundred-thousand Eritreans now live in neighbouring Ethiopia, the arch-enemy of Eritrea. They are located in six camps on the Northern Ethiopian border, and in cities across the country.<sup>21</sup> Sudan, Egypt, Kenya and Uganda are also home to increasingly large Eritrean refugee

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<sup>19</sup> The 1993 referendum provided sovereignty for the idea of Eritrea as a nation.

<sup>20</sup> Plaut. (2016) The Battle for International Opinion. The Guardian. Available at: <https://martinplaut.wordpress.com/2016/05/16/eritrea-the-battle-for-international-opinion/> Some may say that contestations on identity have always been part of the ethnic diversity in the region. What is not contested is that ICT plays a major role in globalising the identity and discussing their identity across borders and continents where people also have their home.

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.wsj.com/articles/eritreans-flee-conscription-and-poverty-adding-to-the-migrant-crisis-in-europe-1445391364>

communities. In 2015 close to 50.000 Eritreans made the difficult journey to Europe, the majority of them over the dangerous Central Mediterranean route.<sup>22</sup> Along these routes refugees used ICTs to negotiate their journey, remain connected and decide the next part of their route. In an immensely dispersed diaspora social media have become the principle connector of those who identify themselves as Eritrean. This chapter seeks to understand how ICTs affect the Eritrean identities. We research how the content of changing identities can be understood from expressions on social media and in ICT-based communications, including publicly available sources (Twitter, Internet) and the dark web (Facebook, mobile phones, Viber, WhatsApp, SMS texts, Skype, YouTube and Paltalk).<sup>23</sup> The analysis includes texts or messages written in English, Tigrinya and Arabic, and cartoons, videos and photographic images.

The contestations over the narratives that underpin Eritrean identities manifest themselves in fierce fights in social media, and involves harsh and abrasive language. A country that has been in a state of war since its inception has created much insecurity for its people. Many Eritreans are looking for a place of protection, and they are dependent on the international community to understand *why* they need protection. At the time of writing this chapter, war was looming menacingly on the Eritrea-Ethiopia border with determined force to further destabilise the region.<sup>24</sup> Meanwhile, the leadership in Eritrea has been accused of committing (ongoing) crimes against humanity and with all this, it means trying to portray an alternative picture of that reality. In between are various Eritrean communities, such as the second generation youth in the diaspora, who are caught between these prevaricated arguments about what it means to be Eritrean, without ever having experienced first-hand what it is like to live in Eritrea. Hence, the analysis of the shifting and ever-changing meaning and basis of Eritrean identities is crucial to the future of

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<sup>22</sup> Frontex. (2016)

<sup>23</sup> An inventory of uses of social media of refugees was made by Kidane, S. (2016)

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.indepthnews.net/index.php/global-governance/un-insider/464-eritrean-ethiopian-border-clashes-might-require-un-intervention>

many Eritreans, including Eritrean refugees, those in the diaspora, and those living within Eritrea.

## Theorising Eritrean identities

This study of Eritrean identities was conducted using hermeneutical textual and discourse analyses. Textual analysis is used in communication studies to understand the meaning of a text by analysing its content, wording and structure, contained in written texts. Textual analysis allows the collection of “information about how other human beings make sense of the world,”<sup>25</sup> in order to “understand the ways in which members of various cultures of world societies and sub-cultures therein make sense of who they are, and of how they fit into the world in which they live.”<sup>26</sup> This approach is associated with the school of Social Constructivist, which studies meaning assigned in a social context. In the domain of social constructionist thought, a social construct is an idea or notion that appears to be natural and obvious to people who accept it.

An important theoretical debate on social constructivist approach is built on the question: “To what extent can Eritrean identity be meaningfully studied and known?” In the English version of Foucault’s book: “The Order of Things,” he invokes the English readership to understand that his work should not be read as social constructivism. In Foucault’s understanding, the *Order of Things* is exactly what we do not know and are incapable of knowing precisely because they are natural to us. Other critiques warn against relativism and the lack of a historical approach in a radical social constructivist approach.<sup>27</sup> In this study, it is proposed to identify and interpret the narratives that are emerging through ICTs and to set these against the historical interpretation of what constitutes the Eritrean identity. In so doing, the study presents a case study that will allow us to study

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<sup>25</sup> McKee (2003)

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Van Reisen, M. (2009) In this book Van Reisen studies how an iconic event can open a Window of Opportunity where new ideas can enter onto the policy agenda because one set of assumptions about what is natural is being replaced by a new set of assumptions.

the impact of ICTs on the perception of the basic order of society, in particular the Westphalian understanding that links identity to bordered geographical locations as opposed to fluid identities built on the matrices of conviviality and processes of becoming.

The study analyses the implicit and explicit meaning of dialogues by contrasting various narratives. As a result, an understanding of the deeper shift in the order of international society emerges. The narrative discourse is then linked to the analysis of the impact that ICTs have on society. The narrative discourses emerge from the open internet, twitter and from the dark web. The dark web is the area of the internet that is not publicly accessible. This defines the narratives that emerge in a relationship with the author(s), as the narratives emerge in a dialogue that takes place between the various communities and in which the authors are interlocutors. The Facebook entries emerge from a number of Facebook groups as well as the timelines of the authors and entries received on other timelines sent to them.

The 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary speech of President Isaias Afwerki was selected for textual analysis. The celebrations were the result of months of careful preparation. It can, therefore, be assumed that the speech is a clear reflection of what the Eritrean government wants to communicate about Eritrean identity, among other things. The textual analysis of this speech is used to understand the content and structure of the widely embraced definition of Eritrean identity presented to both Eritrean society and the international community.

This chapter also draws on research carried out through discourse analysis. ‘Discourse’ is interpreted as “a particular way of talking about and understanding the world (or an aspect of the world)”.<sup>28</sup> Discourse analysis is particularly useful for the analysis of national identities: “[discourse analysis] can be used as a framework for the analysis of national identity. How can we understand national identities and what consequences do the division of the world into nation states have?”<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Jorgensen and Philips (2002) p. 1

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

The communities studied for this chapter are spread across the globe, but have formed social media ‘communities’ based on their identity as Eritreans. Nyamnjoh (2009a, b) has extensively theorised altering the relationship between ICTs, mobility and identities from an African positionality. This chapter studies mobile Eritrean communities who are extremely dependent on ICTs for communication, especially those means that are cheap and flexible.<sup>30</sup> Communications by members of these communities were followed for 12 months (June 2015 to June 2016), during which time the author was involved in legal proceedings initiated by a Dutch leader of the youth wing of the Eritrean government, which exponentially increased the authors’ exposure to communications from members of the Eritrean community and opened access to their various platforms.<sup>31</sup> On that note, this chapter also makes use of an earlier quantitative and qualitative Twitter analysis carried out by researchers from the Leiden Centre of Data Science, which provided a visualization of the organization of Eritrean government-supported communications on Twitter.<sup>32</sup>

This chapter is structured into eight sections, including the introduction and this methodology (sections one and two) and a conclusion (section eight). The next section (section three) analyses President Isaias’s speech and the way it presents Eritrean identity as consisting of innate values. In this section the origins of Eritrean identity are explored including the authenticity of ‘belonging’ in narratives on Eritrean identity. This complex issue appears to be crucial in understanding the space for the evolution of images of Eritrean identity.

The fourth section describes the stagnant identity that has emerged as a result the Eritrean government’s conceptualization of Eritrean identity as a one official identity based on the 30-year war and independence struggle. The inflexibility of this concept has led

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<sup>30</sup> With regards to people inside Eritrea, their exposure on ICTs is limited and government controlled. The country appears last on the list drawn up annually by Reporters without Borders. See: <https://rsf.org/en>

<sup>31</sup> The author was sued by prominent Dutch YPFDJ leader, see: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/mar/01/how-eritrea-is-turning-to-dutch-courts-to-silence-its-critics>

<sup>32</sup> Leiden Centre of Data Science (2016)

to the contestation of Eritrean identity on social media, by supporters and opponents of the Eritrean government, resulting in the emergence of a dual identity (the ‘good’ and the ‘bad’ Eritrean), a development that is explored in the fifth section.

The sixth section looks at the impact of the exodus of people from Eritrea on the Eritrean identity. Graphic images of despair and misery are shared within the community through ICTs. The images that have emerged during this exodus (including of people drowning in the Mediterranean Sea and being tortured in the Sinai<sup>33</sup>) have been described as ‘collective trauma’.<sup>34</sup> This section looks at how this collective trauma has created further division, fragmentation, fear and hostility within Eritrean communities, resulting from global connectedness, yet, ironically, prompting the disintegration of the concept of an ‘official’ or ‘sole’ Eritrean identity.

The seventh section looks at how the disintegration of Eritrean identity has provoked a new approach to the self-study of this identity through historical projects. Initiatives have emerged to research, educate and share the different aspects of Eritrea’s ancient history, including how the current regime emerged and created a power base in what is now the nation state of Eritrea. These initiatives share a desire to understand how Eritreans fit within the region and across borders and to discover Eritrea’s cultural, religious, language and historical roots within the wider region.

### **President Isaias’s speech: Innate values of resilience and resistance**

Eritrea celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> year of independence on 24 May 2016. On this occasion, President Isaias Afwerki addressed his people and it is instructive to analyse the speech he delivered. The speech provides basic direction for the way forward, as he puts it: “All these questions/issues impinge and define the contours of our road-map. In this perspective, I will give a bird’s eye view.”<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> For more on this see:

<sup>34</sup> Kidane, S (2015)

<sup>35</sup> Afwerki, I (2016)

The speech refers to various elements that make up what are considered by the ruling regime as the ‘innate values’ of Eritreans, which constitute Eritrean identity. The first element mentioned by President Isaias throughout the speech is ‘resistance’. Interestingly, he roots the concept of resistance in both ‘values’ and ‘culture,’ making it an intrinsic and inherent Eritrean *value* that is also part of its *culture*, as opposed to a contextually-defined quality:

Resistance is a matter of both culture and heritage. And culture is nurtured by an intertwined value system. A value system takes time; it does not crystallize abruptly or by chance in a fleeting moment. It is accumulated, preserved and inherited in a complex process of formidable challenges over a long period of time.<sup>36</sup>

Second, President Isaias identifies ‘an intertwined value system,’ in which ‘intertwined’ refers to both ‘culture’ and ‘heritage’. In doing so he appeals to a traditional process of understanding identity as inherited from predecessors and rooted in a collective understanding that is inherited through culture. President Isaias takes these concepts of heritage and culture and applies them to a political analysis that is rooted in colonial history and Eritrea’s struggle for independence; he defines Eritrean values as:

To resolutely defy colonial rule, capitulation and dehumanization; the cultivation of mutual respect and compassion; the nurturing of unity, harmony and cohesion; displaying courage, determination, patriotism and sacrifice; to foster ethos of hard work, productivity and creativity; to be steadfast in the face of trying challenges... these are the legacies and hallmarks of our values and the secret behind our victories. Our resilience and developmental progress are accordingly gauged and asserted by these innate attributes.<sup>37</sup>

Hence, it can be said that Eritrean identity is officially defined by a list of values, which include: defiance, unity, harmony and cohesion, courage, determination, patriotism and sacrifice, and hard work.

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<sup>36</sup> The speech was given in Tigrinya, but is accessible in English at the official English website of the Eritrean Government (website shabait.com), <http://shabait.com/news/local-news/19867-president-isaias-afwerkis-24th-independence-anniversary-speech>

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p. 1.



Most importantly, ‘resilience’ is identified as an ‘innate attribute’ and, as such, adds a permanent and intrinsic quality to Eritrean identity.

President Isaias recognizes the need to understand the root source of these ‘innate attributes’ of Eritreans, which he locates in “the quarter century of independence, marked by resilience and development, [...] rooted on a robust foundation of a heroic fifty-year history”. But from where is the Eritrean identity derived? According to President Isaias, the transformation to *one people* took place during the past 50 years: “The fifty previous years represent the consummation of a process that was pivotal in our transformation and being as one people.” Hence, he asserts, there is no need to “to go back to ancient history”.<sup>38</sup>

However, the past is briefly reflected in the official version of identity through “the exemplary feats of resistance and heroism of prominent Eritreans in different times and places against Italian colonialism” with a vague reference to “other predatory powers that preceded [the Italian colonialists]”. Dismayed at the reality of colonial powers defining borders in Africa, President Isaias defines Eritrea as having ‘inalienable national rights’ which were ‘compromised’ by Italian and British occupation and subsequent ‘machinations’. Blaming the United States (US) support to the Ethiopian government led by the Emperor Haile Selassie, he refers to the challenge of “outright annexation and colonial rule by proxy,” and reaches the conclusion that “all the events of the preceding fifty years constitute the bedrock of our 25 years of independence”.<sup>39</sup>

The central concept of President Isaias’s speech is ‘development’ (combined with ‘resistance and development’ or ‘resilience and development’): “Endeavours for development are gauged against these hostilities and challenges”. He goes on to describe a “narrative of incisive hostility against the sovereignty and independence of Eritrea”. The hostilities referred to by President Isaias take three forms: human trafficking, economic sabotage and media campaigns. In his speech, he urges that a campaign of human trafficking “was given paramount priority under the rubric of ‘granting asylum status’ to Eritreans. The campaign was formalized with the official blessing

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p. 1.

of the US President”. President Isaias also refers to ‘economic sabotage,’ which he identifies as the “various obstacles [...] concocted to prevent the collection of the 2% rehabilitation and reconstruction tax as well as remittances,” which are collected from the Eritrean diaspora. In the same vein, political ‘machinations’ are described as media campaigns designed “to prevent objective media portrayal of the reality in Eritrea”.<sup>40</sup>

President Isaias repeatedly asserts that Eritrea’s history of ‘resilience’ and ‘resistance’ is part and parcel of Eritrean culture: “This [resistance] occurred because the Eritrean people managed to progressively invigorate their culture and value system of resistance,” resulting in “a quarter century of resilience”. Resistance is described as ‘all-rounded,’ i.e., “legal, political, informational, diplomatic and National Security” and as ‘enhanced’ or ‘more potent’. In President Isaias’s short speech (of less than 2,300 words) the word ‘resistance’ is used 11 times.

### **Stagnant identity: The ‘sole Eritrean’**

Eritrea is governed by the People’s Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ). The PFDJ emerged from the Eritrean People’s Liberation Front (EPLF), which brought Eritrea to national independence in 1991. Historically, the EPLF was one of several liberation movements waging military campaigns in the region, split from the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF). The ‘Tigray People’s Liberation Front’<sup>41</sup> was modelled after the EPLF, but was independent from it. Different ethnic and political programmes were associated with these various liberation projects.<sup>42</sup> The legitimacy of

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>41</sup> The TPLF was set up to create an independent nation of Tigray. They perceived the Eritrean movement as a movement set to free Eritrea from Amhara dominance and as Tigray and Mereb Milash (highland Eritrea) were considered regions in the historical context, the Tigrayans wanted the same independence Eritrea wanted. For them being a part of an Amhara-led Empire was domination and not historically acceptable.

<sup>42</sup> The EPLF-TPLF friendship provided the basis for an uprising against Amhara dominance (in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia), which the Tigrinya speakers of the Tigray and Mereb Milash regions couldn’t accept. Other tribes, the Tigre, Blin, Afar and Saho also didn’t accept Amhara dominance as legitimate.

the PFDJ hinges on the independence of Eritrea and is dependent on the political and historic understanding of more than 50-years of colonial history as the basis of Eritrea's common identity.

The understanding that the PFDJ and its youth wing, the Youth People's Front for Democracy and Justice (YPFDJ), is a renaming of the EPLF is discussed in various social media exchanges.<sup>43</sup> One of the authors received this message on Facebook from an Eritrean commentator: "The crux of his message is that YPFDJ can never be non-political and that YPFDJ and EPLF are one and the same."<sup>44</sup> The same person explains the importance of the gathering in which the political head of the PFDJ, Yemane Gebreab<sup>45</sup>, instructs Youth PFDJ cadre in Europe to be the eyes and ears of the PFDJ and to identify any enemies, their means and methods to help strengthen the PFDJ.<sup>46</sup> Eritrea means PFDJ; hence, Eritrea is not imagined outside the realm of the PFDJ, and strengthening Eritrea, therefore, means consolidating and strengthening the PFDJ. These goals – the development of Eritrea and the strengthening of the PFDJ – are identified as one and the same. And the means to achieve them is to "fight against hostilities and enemies".<sup>47</sup>

The head of the political bureau of the PFDJ and advisor to President Isaias, Yemane Gebreab, asserts that the Eritrean identity is, by definition, 'one of a kind,' irreplaceable and inescapable. To a journalist who asked what the justification for the 2% tax of members of the Eritrean diaspora was, Yemane Gebreab explained: "All Eritreans, inside or outside the country, remain Eritrean with the same rights and obligations".<sup>48</sup> In a brief exchange about Yemane

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<sup>43</sup> This analysis was prepared in the context of a second and third court case in which members associated with the YPFDJ sued Volkskrant newspaper.

<sup>44</sup> Personal conversation in email with Kubrom Dafla Hosabay (January 2016) MVR, 9 February 2016. Referring to film Available in youtube and facebook (sent 9 February 2016):

<https://www.facebook.com/freweini.ghebresadick/videos/1172476499459029/>

<sup>45</sup> The official title of Yemane Gebreab is "Political Advisor to the president and head of the Political Affairs of the PFDJ." Available at:

<http://www.yatedo.com/p/Yemane+Gebreab/famous/2d8baf72d1f6b1b3d4c6befc029bb9ef> (accessed 17 June 2016)

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> United Nations Press conference, 8 June 2016, Geneva

Gebreab's statement that all Eritreans are the same, a Tweet sent by a supporter of the government (identified with the patriotic name of Nakfa) gave rise to confusion. While wanting to agree with the statement of Gebreab, the Tweeter got mixed up with the actual reality of his life, which contradicted the idea of a sole Eritrean identity, with the uniform rights and obligations. He pointed out that Eritreans in the diaspora actually have very different obligations, first and foremost because they have no obligation to enter into the life-long national service required of Eritreans living within Eritrea.<sup>49</sup>

By contrast members of the opposition see the PFDJ (also called HGDEF<sup>50</sup>) as cause of all problems. A Facebook entry reads: "The key to all the problems in Eritrea is to remove the gangster regime (HGDEF) from the power; war is an old strategy of HGDEF to stay in power by mobilising all the attention of our people to the border issues!".<sup>51</sup> The contest over who is the 'true' Eritrean demonstrates the existence of multiple identities, some of which not recognised by the present Eritrean government.

While these patterns show a dualistic model of two camps, there is some exchange between the different sides of the spectrum. Especially when arguments become confused, a new zone of understanding emerges. This can happen when supporters are expected to defend something that may be contradicted by their own experience of reality. Such confusion can provide new insights into the reality of life for many Eritreans inside the country. In an unprecedented visit to Eritrea in May 2016, France 24 TV showed the reality of forced labour and slavery<sup>52</sup> in labour camps in Eritrea,

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<sup>49</sup> Nakfa (2016) Twitter exchange between @mvreisen and Nakfa, 8 June 2016. Available at: Twitter @mvreisen.

<sup>50</sup> Hzbawi Gnbar nDemokrasin Fit'hin: Hzbawi, People's; Gnbar, Front; n for; Demokrasi Democracy, n and, Fit'hi Justice.

<sup>51</sup> Anon. (2016) Facebook (13 June 2016)  
<https://www.facebook.com/habtom.hab?fref=nf>

<sup>52</sup> The UN Commission of Inquiry on Eritrea (2016) uses the term 'slavery': "186. Also central to the Eritrean leadership's campaign to perpetuate its hold on power has been its wholesale disregard for the right to liberty and security of Eritrean citizens. Specifically, and as will be discussed in further detail below, Eritrean officials have committed the acts of enslavement, imprisonment, enforced disappearance, torture, reprisals as other inhumane acts, persecution, rape and murder. 187. Enslavement has been committed on an on-going, large-scale and

which they stumbled upon while being officially ‘supervised’ by a guide – a young Eritrean woman raised in Switzerland who had returned to Eritrea. Following the official line that the country has nothing to hide, the guide was persuaded to assist in interviewing the workers who used the opportunity to explain on camera the desperation of their situation.<sup>53</sup>

The idea that Eritrea equals the PFDJ and that the PFDJ is the only reference for Eritrean identity is increasingly being questioned on Facebook. A major concern for the writers of these discourses is the discrepancy between the imagined singularity of the official Eritrean identity and the divided reality on the ground. A commentator on Facebook thus notes:

I think the supporters of the so-called PFDJ think they have come from a different part of the universe! They always claim that they are unique and brag about things that really don’t make sense. And to demise that claim, they can provide neither scientific nor logical evidence of their uniqueness.<sup>54</sup>

Something else emerges from analysis of exchanges on Facebook: the possibility that the PFDJ itself has divisions. This is from a Facebook entry posted on 15 February 2016, after the court case that involved one of the authors and a Dutch leader of the YPFDJ. The entry reports on a Paltalk discussion (a group chat on the Internet) that took place within the PFDJ/YPFDJ to discuss the repercussions of the loss of the court case and what possible action to take next. The entry divides the PFDJ into the PFDJ1 and PFDJ2:

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methodical basis since no later than 2002. 255 Imprisonment, enforced disappearance, torture, reprisals as

other inhumane acts, and persecution have been committed on an on-going large-scale and

methodical manner since 1991. 256 Rape has been committed since 1991, and murder has been committed in a methodical manner since 1991. UN Commission of Inquiry. (2016). Detailed findings of the commission of inquiry on human rights in Eritrea. Report for the UN Human Rights Commission. 32<sup>nd</sup> Session. A/HRC/32/CRP.1.

<sup>53</sup> TV France 24 (13 May 2015) <http://www.france24.com/fr/20160513-video-reporter-visa-erythree-asmara-dictature-ethiopie>

<sup>54</sup> Anon. (2016) Facebook post, 9 June 2016. Available at: <https://www.Facebook.com/abduarsd?fref=nf>

(ypdj lala land 15-02-2016) reports coming out of ypdfj chat rooms in lala land indicate that Meseret Bahlibi is consulting with the wise men and women of ypdfj and pfdj1 and pfdj2 on whether to appeal the court decision on his case against Prof Mirjam Van Reisen. Although consultation outcomes are to be officially launched later on this week a leaked report indicates that Meseret is confused by three sets of advise [sic] and one call for reality check. [...] Meseret is expected to instruct his lawyer in the next few days but was said to be ever so confused by which head of the pfdj hydra he should listen to and spent the weekend wishing it was May 2015 when everything was black and white and pfdj was just pfdj.<sup>55</sup>

The analysis of social media posts shows that the imagined reality of ‘one-ness’ and the lived reality in which differences and distinctions appear may even be leading to confusion inside the core of the PFDJ. This may lead to confusion and uncertainty, all the more so because it contradicts the very same order that is at the foundation of the PFDJ.

### **Social media: The emergence of duality and diversity in Eritrean identities**

In social media the imagined identity of the Eritrean is breaking up in an often emotive quest for ‘othering’ as opposed to ‘saming’ – to define opponents to the PFDJ as ‘others’. Departing from the idea of a ‘sole’ Eritrean, two opposing groups have emerged. It is a relatively new development. Until recently, the potential repercussions for critics of the PFDJ were sufficiently serious that the majority of people would not be willing to risk openly disagreeing with the party line.<sup>56</sup> This is not only the case in Eritrea, where disloyalty is punished by prison and detention, but also in the

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<sup>55</sup> Facebook. “Shigurti News” (2015) *Meseret Bahlibi might appeal against the ruling last week*. “Shigurti News,” 5 February. Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/mirjam.vanreisen>. Shigurti news is a mock name used in the post.

<sup>56</sup> UN Commission of Inquiry on Eritrea (2016) Detailed findings of Commission of Inquiry on Eritrea. A/HRC/32/CRP.1. 8 June 2016. Various persons (2016) *Personal comm*. Statements provided to author in January 2016. Official statement provided to present in Court (January 2016).

diaspora, where social exclusion poses a challenge for migrants who heavily depend on their small communities.

Eritrean migrant communities are very active on Facebook and Twitter, and the involvement of the second generation has been encouraged by the Eritrean government which has encouraged youth community-building in the diaspora. A new following, conversant with modern ICTs, as well as different languages and cultures, who are able to effectively communicate with the outside world. However, communication through social media has also created greater scope for free speech. People can hide their identities and use pen-names, as many do. Moreover, social media brings together like-minded people from across the globe, reducing dependency on small migrant communities.

But social media is not just about space for freedom of speech. Twitter and Facebook have become places where the loyalty of supporters is tested and where any commentator, Eritrean or otherwise, who opposes the regime is ‘corrected’. A data-analysis of Twitter-use visualises Twitter-streams sent by regime supporting groups to people considered opponents of the regime.<sup>57</sup> This is called ‘trolling’.<sup>58</sup> Messaging on social media is carried out in creative, but also brutal, ways and differences of opinion are perceived as battles over space and for survival. In a Tweet directed at journalist Martin Plaut (2016) and one of the authors the harsh nature of these attacks – in words and images – is illustrated by the depiction of two vampires. Equally demonizing are the images of President Isaias and other leaders of the regime, depicted presumably by opponents of the regime.

From these images, a very different ‘order of things’ emerges, in which opinion is used as a battlefield. In this contestation a new concept emerges: that the Eritrean identity is not what is determined and framed by the political leadership – but that ‘Eritrea’ is distinct

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<sup>57</sup> This graph was based on an analysis of Tweets from May 2015 to January 2016. Leiden Centre of Data Science (2016) *Ibid*.

<sup>58</sup> The Guardian. (2015) From online trolling to death threats – the war to defend Eritrea's reputation. 18 August 2015. Online. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/aug/18/eritrea-death-threats-tolls-United-nations-social-media> (accessed 11 June 2016). Personal communication to Mirjam van Reisen in messenger. Persons anonymised. 29 January 2016.

from the PFDJ. Government controlled Eritrean media suggested that the UN sanctions were done to 'Eritrea' and the UN Commission of Inquiry was acting against the interest of Eritrean people. Consequentially, Eritrean opposition groups that were emerging, needed to make a clearer distinction between the government (and the potential perpetrators of crimes) and the Eritrean people. On 8 June 2016, the day that the UN Commission of Inquiry Report<sup>59</sup> delivered its verdict that, according to its investigation, Eritrea has committed crimes against humanity, a Facebook comment read: "It is not Eritrea committing crimes. It is the PFDJ. Don't mix those two."<sup>60</sup>

The notion that 'Eritrea' is not the same as the 'PFDJ' has increasingly underpinned actions by various groups opposing the ruling regime. In a discussion on Facebook about justice-seekers in the lead up to a political demonstration, a participant suggested carrying a different coloured flag so as to be clearly distinguished from the demonstrators organized by the PFDJ. The underlying theme of the discussion was how to demonstrate the distinction between Eritrean identity and the PFDJ-constructed identity of Eritreans. Subsequently more pictures and discussions about the flag (and an alternative flag) emerged. Dialogues focused on how to claim this distinction and which spaces (including the symbol of the official flag) to claim.<sup>61</sup> A Facebook entry read: "Let all of us raise the blue flag on 23/6/16 to prove that freedom starts by being free from HEGDEF's [the PFDJ's] flag."<sup>62</sup> In such ways, entries on Facebook are challenging the notion of the PFDJ as the holder of traditional Eritrean values. What constitutes the basis for the Eritrean nation is in fact a complex history, as is the case around all geographical border areas.

The region has been characterised by mobility. People from all over Ethiopia migrated to Eritrea from the 1920s up to the 1940s.

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<sup>59</sup> Commission of Inquiry on Eritrea (2016). *Report of the Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in Eritrea*. Available at: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/CoIEritrea/Pages/ReportCoIEritrea.aspx> (accessed 11 June 2016)

<sup>60</sup> Anon. (2016) Facebook post, MVR, 8 June 2016. Link not identified.

<sup>61</sup> Anon. (2016) Facebook post, MVR, 8 June 2016. Link not identified.

<sup>62</sup> Anon. (2016) Facebook post, 8 June 2016) Link not identified



While people from other regions of Ethiopia were generally viewed as strangers - even if they had lived in Eritrea for decades, Tigrayans integrated with the society much more easily. Muslim Tigrayan craftsmen who constitute a big part of present day Juberti (Muslim Tigrinya speakers) were and still are an important part of the business communities in towns.

The relatively more prosperous economy in Eritrea meant that people from Tigray were tempted to migrate to Eritrea. The economy in Tigray was far from the Ethiopian or Eritrean economic centres and there was little development taking place. It was a safe and secure move that allowed them to carry out whatever kind of employment they found without social pressure. Migration continued even as the war of independence raged in Eritrea. During the mid-1980s famine tens of thousands of Tigrayans migrated to Eritrea to escape the war and stayed until independence.

Tigrayan workers, most of them from the Agame region in the earlier years, migrated to Eritrea as permanent refugees and seasonal workers. During those years up to the 1980s famine in northern Ethiopia, the view that the Agame were 'dirty,' 'backward' and 'poor beggars' became an almost undisputed conception among Eritreans. The concept even seems to have been exported to the Amharas (in Central Ethiopia) who sometimes use the term 'Agame' as a derogative.

The peoples of highland Abyssinia have been competing with each other for space and resources for at least the last 500 years. As a consequence there are many derogatory names used to call each other (as is usually the case in all regions of the world). The Amharic term Tigre meaning Tigrinya speaker is used as a derogative term. In Sudan, calling an Abyssinian by the term "Habesh" is used as an insult. For highland Eritreans calling someone Sudanese is a joking insult. Eritreans called the Amhara and other soldiers of the Dergue 'Adgi,' (donkey). The Tigrayans sometimes use the term Hamasien as an insult to mean 'foolish'.

In 2000 Ethiopia deported Tigray and Amharic speaking citizens because of their supposed Eritrean ancestry origin or connections.<sup>63</sup> The deportations fuelled the idea that the Tigrayans were competing for domination in the region and the derogatory ‘term’ ‘agame’ is, at least in part, in the memory of many associated with the fear evoked by the expulsion. The increased use of the term ‘Agame’ can be associated with discrimination against people who have Tigrayan origins, and more often than not people who have no Tigrayan ancestry. The term ‘Agame’ can be used as a tactic to destroy almost any vocal dissident. The term ‘Agame’ is now generally used to identify anyone who disagrees with. Paradoxically the use of the word ‘agame’ in this sense prompted Eritreans to look at the histories of the PFDJ leadership itself.

The Internet and social media have become places for mockery and accusations where such terms are used. On Twitter, mock accounts of President Isaias Afwerki and his advisors have appeared under the name @agamedictator, which refers to a (false) accusation that the President was born in Ethiopian (agame). In a mock Tweet account of Yemane Gebreab, the head of the PFDJ, he is also mocked for his non-Eritrean roots, as Irish or Pakistani. To call Isayas ‘Agame’ is a derogatory term to imply a Tigrayan origin from Agame Region of Tigray.

The point is that the loose use of such terms in social media and on the internet, demonstrate how complex the reality of nationhood is if brought in relation to ethnicity. On the Eritrean border this is no different from elsewhere. In a recent debate between the Ambassadors of Eritrea and Ethiopia on Kenyan TV on the clashes that erupted between the two countries in the weekend of 10-11 June

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<sup>63</sup> Natalie S. Klein, N.S. 1998. Mass Expulsion from Ethiopia. Report on the Deportation of Eritreans and Ethiopians of Eritrean origin from Ethiopia, June – August. *Report* produced for the Eritrean Government. Available at: [https://www.essex.ac.uk/armedcon/story\\_id/MASS%20EXPULSION%20FROM%20ETHIOPIA%201.pdf](https://www.essex.ac.uk/armedcon/story_id/MASS%20EXPULSION%20FROM%20ETHIOPIA%201.pdf) (accessed 19 January 2016); All Africa. 28 June 2000. Eritrea. 150 Eritreans deported from Ethiopia. Available at: <http://allafrica.com/stories/200006280074.html> (accessed 19 June 2016). See online By: Berhan Araya. March 11, 2004. Deportation. We haven’t forgotten. *Online*: [http://dehai.org/demarcation-watch/articles/Berhan\\_Araya\\_deportation-we\\_havent\\_forgotten.html](http://dehai.org/demarcation-watch/articles/Berhan_Araya_deportation-we_havent_forgotten.html) (accessed 19 June 2016)

2016, the Eritrean Ambassador spoke quite frankly about the not yet demarcated border as an ‘imaginary border’ between the two countries (KTN News, 17 June 2016).<sup>64</sup> While emphasizing the sovereignty of each country, from the discussion the reality of the long history of kinship between the two countries clearly emerged as well.

The various Facebook entries show that refugees and members of the Eritrean diaspora are self-defining Eritrea, bringing out what they see as contradiction of the official values proclaimed by the government by reality. A post on 11 June 2016 read: “A nation celebrates foreigners rather than its citizens! A nation doesn’t mourn for their drowned youngsters! A nation defiant for NOTHING! Is official called now ‘The State of Eritrea’.”<sup>65</sup>

Social media has allowed Eritrean communities, especially migrant communities, to interact in ways that are relatively safer. It also provides a platform of various levels of anonymity to begin exchanges. This has created space for heated exchanges between protagonists of the PFDJ-led regime and their opponents. The image of a ‘sole’ Eritrean identity has been replaced in social media by a dualistic identity of the ‘good’ and the ‘bad’ Eritrean (the bad Eritrean being the PFDJ – or opponents to the PFDJ, depending on the perspective). The question arises as to which of these two groups represents the ‘true’ Eritrean or, in other words, who is entitled to define what constitutes Eritrean identity and Eritrea as a country.

## **Collective trauma**

“Please all Eritrean people in all parts of the world; open your eyes!”<sup>66</sup> Horrendous and deeply traumatizing images are circulated to inform and warn fellow Eritreans of the hazardous journeys undertaken to flee Eritrea and find protection. These images include

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<sup>64</sup> World View on KTN news, 17 June 2016, Ethiopian and Eritrean Ambassadors go head-to-head Available on YouTube: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ee67BOv\\_5hg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ee67BOv_5hg)

<sup>65</sup> Anon. 2016. Facebook post, MvR, 11 June 2016.

<sup>66</sup> Anon. 2016. Facebook post, MVR, 9 June 2016. Link not identified. and Anon. 2016. Facebook. 9 June 2016. Link not identified.

sinking boats, endless rows of coffins, executions, prisons and torture. Facebook pages display the photographs of large numbers of missing Eritreans and there is even a Facebook page dedicated to missing Eritreans.<sup>67</sup> The impact of these messages and images on individual trauma are of a concern and the collective trauma provoked by sharing these images is of grave concern.<sup>68</sup> The lack of closure for families with missing relatives only adds to the level of trauma experienced. This includes families of people who have disappeared in Eritrea. A Facebook entry reads: “I haven’t seen my husband in seven years and don’t know if he is alive or not. I searched for him, but the authorities finally told me just don’t bother coming back, there’s no point.”<sup>69</sup>

Selam Kidane (2016) highlights the ‘collective trauma’ that has emerged from these dramatic images and how these are shared through ICTs among Eritreans in the diaspora. Referring to this particular context, she defines collective trauma as:

... when people who have a sense of belonging to one another feel they have been subject to fearful and painful events which have left their mark on their collective consciousness and memory. Here trauma is a social construct with an impact not just on the past (or present) identity of subjects but also on their future identity.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> See: <https://www.facebook.com/Miissing.Eritreans/> (accessed 9 June 2016).

<sup>68</sup> See research by Selam Kidane on individual and collective trauma among Eritreans. Kidane, S (2015) *Migration and trauma* (research Proposal to Leiden University, Oct 2015). A similar phenomenon is reported in relation to media journalists reporting on the refugee crisis: The Guardian (12 June 2016) <http://www.theguardian.com/media/2016/jun/12/refugee-crisis-news-organisations> (accessed 12 June 2016).

<sup>69</sup> Facebook. 2016. Anon. 12 June 2016.

<https://www.facebook.com/freweini.ghebresadick>

<sup>70</sup> Kidane, S. 2015. ‘Migration and Trauma,’ November 2015, Presentation GAIC Seminar, The Hague, 15 April 2016, University of Leiden. [quoting Pastor, L. H. (2004) Culture as Casualty: Examining the cause and consequences of collective trauma. *Psychiatric Annals*, 34, 616 -22.]. See also: Cohen-Silver et al (2002) and Pfefferbaum et al (2005).

A disaster in one place can have serious impacts elsewhere. Days after the Lampedusa disaster in 2014, when a boat with hundreds of (mostly) Eritrean refugees sank, demonstrations took place in the refugee camp Mai Ayni in Ethiopia. In conversations carried out with one of the authors in 2015, it came to light that refugees in the camps blamed authorities for the situation that forced Eritrean youth to take such a hazardous journey in search of safety.<sup>71</sup> The regime in Asmara, the capital of Eritrea, also responded feverishly and authorities forbade people to mourn their loved ones. Eritrean refugees and relatives felt betrayed by the Eritrean government who, in their eyes, did nothing to protect them from such disasters. These examples illustrate how in our interconnected world emotions move fast across geographic boundaries. The Eritrean experience became a global, depressing picture, engaging relatives at home and in the diaspora.

The global network of Eritrean refugees depends on ICTs; mobile phones help to keep families in touch, negotiate with smugglers and traffickers, identify best options and migration routes, and organize payments to support their journey. Mobile money transfers are also used in cases of human trafficking to transfer ransom amounts. Those without money can face death or deportation back to Eritrea and its many prisons.

These global communities also use the Internet, mobile phones and mobile money transfer facilities to strengthen their resilience and protect each other. Fr. Mussie Zerai is among those who have been able to save many lives by receiving mobile phone calls from refugees on the sea, who depend on his ability to inform coast guards at sea and motivate them to help bring people to safety. With events shared on the Internet, entire communities participate in the grief if people are not saved, as illustrated in the following message posted on Facebook: “I lost my younger brother’s wife with her 11 years old son in Mediterranean Sea yesterday crossing from Egypt to Europe.”<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Anon. 2015. *Personal comm.* (Conversation between MVR and T, September 2015).

<sup>72</sup> Anon. 2016. Facebook post, MVR and MA, 10 June 2016. <https://www.facebook.com/munir.abdalla.9?fref=nf>

Information quickly spreads through the Internet. On 8 June, the Italian and British police announced in the media that they had captured a key human trafficker. The announcement was accompanied by a photograph, which was circulating on the Facebook Timelines of many Eritreans. Numerous refugees in Sudan and Libya contacted Eritrean journalist, Meron Estefanos in Sweden informing her that the police had caught the wrong man, which she then confirmed to the BBC on Twitter: Italy has arrested a wrong guy, the person they have is a 28 years old Eritrean refugee. The General is 36 years old.<sup>73</sup> The same day, the police admitted they were checking the identity of the man.

The youngest generation of Eritrean refugees are extremely vulnerable to political predators and social circumstances. Family members find themselves split between different countries in North African region, Israel, North America and Europe, with little chance of being reunited such that children are raised without the possibility of meeting their parents. Many depend on mobile money remittances sent from richer family members who have settled in Europe or elsewhere. They have no bank accounts and their lives are precarious. They are often monitored and persecuted by the Eritrean security forces in North African countries and are sometimes forcibly returned to Eritrea where they may 'disappear' in prison.<sup>74</sup> These refugees point to the PFDJ as the main cause of their suffering. They also believe that the image presented by the Eritrean government and its supporters is completely distorted and disconnected from reality.

The 'Stop Slavery' campaign is one of the groups raising awareness of the situation of servitude of 400,000 people in Eritrea, a situation which has now been officially confirmed in the UN Commission of Inquiry report (2016).<sup>75</sup> Their organizing on the

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<sup>73</sup> Estefanos, M. 2016. Tweet by @meronina to @BBCWorld, 8 June 2016. Available at: <https://twitter.com/meronina>

<sup>74</sup> Plaut, M. (24 May 2016) Blog. <https://martinplaut.wordpress.com/2016/05/24/eritreans-rounded-up-in-sudan/>

<sup>75</sup> This is the figure mentioned by Mike Smith in the press conference during the Presentation of the second report of the Commission of Inquiry 2016, see: <http://webtv.un.org/topics-issues/specialized-agencies/watch/commission-of->

Internet involves crowdfunding. The motivation for donations reflects the trauma felt as a result of collective suffering. This is an entry of one of the supporters of the campaign:

My prayers are always with those who are working so hard to stop the slavery in Eritrea. May the Lord consoles to [sic] all parents who lost their sons, in the Mediterranean and in Eritrea by unjustified death.<sup>76</sup>

Such activities on the internet or social media can be considered as elements that constitute and contribute to ICTs-based new form of commemorating, healing and transitional justice. An important element of transition justice is to “bring ‘healing’ to communities through a process of interrogation and the reorientation of memories to enable reintegration into the community.” Memory, as embodied history, takes a crucial place in that it attaches itself to sites. The internet and social media in general becomes increasingly the emotional site to which traumatic memories are attached.

The fate of refugees conflicts sharply with the image of Eritrea provided by YPFDJ groups, especially those located in Western countries, which are well organized and loudly and publicly profess their loyalty to the PFDJ. Refugees judge second generation YPFDJ members harshly. Eritrean refugees ask openly why those YPFDJ who are so positive about the country do not move back. The following is a Facebook entry that says that Eritreans who go back to Eritrea (and presumably support the PFDJ) should not be given asylum in Europe: “Eritreans need to decide: support a dictator and forget their right to asylum or request asylum and stay away from supporting PFDJ.”<sup>77</sup> The same day as this post was made, the Swiss Minister of Justice announced a new migration policy that would protect genuine asylum seekers, but in which refugees who kept ties

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inquiry-on-eritrea-press-conference-geneva-8-june-2016/4930296361001 (8 june 2016)

<sup>76</sup> Yhidhego, N. 2016. *Help us make the Geneva 23 Demo a Success. #EndImpunityinEri*. YouCaring. Compassionate crowdfunding, for Geneva 23 Demo. Available at: <https://www.youcaring.com/geneva-23-demo-donatenow-579149> (accessed 11 June 2016)

<sup>77</sup> Anon. 2016. Facebook post, MVR, 10 June 2016.

with the PFDJ government would no longer be granted protection in Switzerland.<sup>78</sup>

The information that is being circulated on the Internet and shared with Eritrean communities living in all corners of the globe is deeply dividing them. This is consistent with the impact of collective trauma, described by Selam Kidane (2016):

It [collective trauma] polarizes communities into groups of victims and perpetrators. Fear and suspicion creates many secrets and limits spontaneity and openness in conversations and relationships which leads to ‘cultural disorientation’ when the regular (or known) context loses stability. It impairs community competence and affects the quality of problem-solving and decision-making within the community.<sup>79</sup>

Collective trauma should also be looked at in terms of the impact of the trauma on the relationships between members of the collective (sub-systems). In the case of Eritrea, communities and family structures have disintegrated, undermining what it means to be Eritrean and the values and culture that underpin this identity.

## **Redefining ‘Eritrean’ identity**

Many of the refugees who have fled Eritrea have found a home in Ethiopia or Sudan and, despite many difficulties, experience none of the ‘hostilities’ referred to in President’s Isaias’s speech. In conversations with people in the refugee camps in the northern part of Ethiopia, young refugees generally express the position that it would be better if Ethiopia would ‘take over’ Eritrea and save its people. An exiled journalist writes in a personal communication with

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<sup>78</sup> EastAfro. 2016. *Eritreans on leave: Asylum seekers on holiday vacation will lose their status*. EastAfro, 10 June 2016. [www.nzz.ch](http://www.nzz.ch)

<sup>79</sup> Kidane, S. 2016. *Trauma and the Eritrean refugee crisis*. Research Seminar to mark Eritrea’s Silver Jubilee, Geneva, May 2016 [quoting Shamai, M. (2016) Systemic Interventions for Collective and national Trauma. Routledge]. See also: Cohen-Silver, R., Holman, A., Macintosh, D.N., Poulin, M. & Gil Rivas, V. (2002). Nationwide longitudinal study of psychological response to Sept 11. *JAMA*, 288, 1235 -44; Pfefferbaun, B. J., DeVoe, E.R., Stuber, J., Sciff, M., Klein, T. & Fairbrother, G. (2005) Psychological Impact of Terrorism on Children and Families in the United States. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment and Trauma*, 10, 277-88.



one of the authors: “For one, if PFDJs are committing crimes against humanity, governments, say Ethiopia, might have a moral obligation to enter Eritrea and save the people.”<sup>80</sup> The readiness to adopt Ethiopia as a potential saviour is remarkable, given that Eritrea fought against it during the 30-year war and considering how many people died during this war. Collective trauma, accelerated by ICTs, has fundamentally divided Eritreans, and many are ready to look at alternative ways of defining their identity.

The blog *Shedelli* (2016) publishes interesting historical narratives on Eritrea. One story explains the important role of party-controlled media (state radio and TV) as a means of controlling loyalty. Anyone accused of thinking ‘independently’ of the party-line risks disappearing for good or being killed by the regime. The blog presents an interesting perspective on the strategy and organization underpinning thought control in the country: “It was usual for people to check the Voice of the Masses radio to confirm what to think about events they were seeing with their own eyes.”<sup>81</sup>

Eritrea, as a historical project, has emerged on social media sites, which are providing new platforms for reflections on Eritrea’s past, beyond its brief history of the last 50 years, and reflecting in entirely new ways on how the Eritrean identity has emerged from the variety of ethnicities, languages, religions and cultures in the region. Among the refugees are community-taught historians, linguists and archaeologists, who are delving into the old cultures of the Horn of Africa and rearranging the understanding of the tapestry of identities in the region. These research projects also take the form of teach-ins through Internet-based TV and YouTube, Paltalk meetings and presentations, radio programmes and podcasts.<sup>82</sup> The United Eritrea Media site contains a clip presenting ‘The story of ancient Eritrea,’ a

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<sup>80</sup> Anon. 2016. *Personal comm.* (Skype conversation between MVR and ZG, 10 June 2016).

<sup>81</sup> Yohannes, B (2016) *PFDJ: Redefining reality in Eritrea*. Shedelli [blog], 21 February 2016. Available at: <http://shedelli.blogspot.be/2016/02/pfdj-redefining-reality-in-eritrea-by.html#more> (accessed 11 June 2016).

<sup>82</sup> Some examples are: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zoYRFo5Ag0Y>; <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/erena-online>. <http://unitederitreamedia.com/blog12/2015/06/09/eritrea-president-targeted-by-new-swedish-law/>

perspective on ancient traditional cultures that provides an alternative to the narrow historical perspective of the official PFDJ line.<sup>83</sup>

These historical projects are shifting the parameters of identity in the region. The United Eritrea Media website identifies that “around 90% of today’s Eritreans speak languages (Tigrinya and Tigre) that are closely related to the now-extinct Geez language – as do Tigrinya-speakers in northern Ethiopia and Amharic-speakers of Ethiopia, among others”.<sup>84</sup> The orientation towards the long, rich history of the region to which Eritrea belongs, provides a very different perspective on the current situation and its future. In this future, Eritreans may well find a home within the region, rather than within the territorial space of Eritrea occupied by the PFDJ.

The investigation of history (the study of events) in conjunction with memory (the embodied remembering) is essential for communities who have been collectively traumatised and who must now move forward, carrying the pain of all that has been lost. The stability of networks that provided support during that journey may continue to play an important role in the transformation; Anderson (2006) drew this important lesson from the post conflict transformation in Liberia:

People continue to rely on the resilient informal structures and coping mechanisms which determined politics and facilitated survival and conflict resolution both before and during the war. Ignoring these institutions is done at the peril of the chances for lasting peace. Some of them – even when based on divisive categories such as ethnicity, clan, or religion – could be important building blocks for a peaceful post-conflict order.

Exploring the importance of traditional and indigenous culture for healing processes that may be the basis of transitional social

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<sup>83</sup> United Eritrea Media (2016) *The story of ancient Eritrea*. United Eritrea Media [blog] (in Eritrean), 11 June 2016. Available at:

<http://unitederitreamedia.com/blog12/> (accessed 11 June 2016)

<sup>84</sup> Haile, N (2016) *Eritrea is an ancient name associated in the past*. United Eritrea Media [blog] (in Eritrean), 11 June 2016. Available at:

<http://ancientpeoples.tumblr.com/post/35636635265/eritrea-is-an-ancient-name-associated-in-the-past> (accessed 11 June 2016).

justice practices, Van Reisen and Mekonnen (2011) compared Zimbabwe and Eritrea. They concluded that truth-telling is a common element that allows communities to re-integrate after the fragmentation caused by conflict:

In most African countries, such as Eritrea and Zimbabwe, indigenous knowledge and belief systems of communities assume a central role in the social and political life of communities, assisting in the healing of victims, perpetrators, affected families and the community at large. These include deeply-rooted practices and symbolic rituals of reconciliation, which are important for the purposes of truth telling and healing.”<sup>85</sup>

In a heart-breaking *YouTube* fragment, entitled “those who cannot pay,” journalist Meron Estefanos (2014) speaks with an Eritrean torture victim of human trafficking and a young Eritrean alleged perpetrator of torture and killings. It would seem that through YouTube the truth-seeking and healing process, however, difficult, has already begun.<sup>86</sup>

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has looked at how ICTs is accelerating the ever-changing identities of Eritrea. Eritrea is a country with a clear and well-defined territory, yet its identity has become more fluid due to the tantalising processes of becoming and conviviality. It fought for independence in a 30-year protracted war, and is still a strong nation today, 25 years later. President Isaias’s speech on the occasion of its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of independence paints a clearly-defined identity of Eritrea and its people. An identity which is portrayed as shared common values and culture – but which is certainly contested. By some – or possibly many, it is experienced as imposed.

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<sup>85</sup> Van Reisen, M. and Mekonnen (2011). Van Reisen (2016).

<sup>86</sup> 3 July 2014. “Those who cannot pay. Youtube. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DvVU65gllXE> (accessed 17 June 2016).

However, social media and the Internet depict a very different and more than a dualistic idea of Eritrean identity. The Eritrean people have emerged in recent years as a divided community with competing perspectives, with many contesting the official version of a sole Eritrean identity. ICTs, which have allowed people to share tragic circumstances all over the globe, seem to be contributing to collective trauma among Eritreans. This collective trauma is resulting in the further fragmentation, distrust and disorientation of the Eritrean people and is giving rise to a new sense of identity.

The trauma has led many Eritrean refugees to adopt what are generally considered 'hostile' countries in northern Africa, such as Ethiopia, and countries in the West, as their home. Some even see these countries as potential 'saviours' of those who have remained behind in Eritrea, by way of military intervention. There is a fierce contestation between government supporters and opponents of the regime in the diaspora in these adopted countries. It results in competition on Internet-based social media, such as Twitter and Facebook, with unrestrained images of 'otherness' used to control the public opinion. So, in the end, Eritrean communities appear to be divided and to be at odds over the question of what constitutes being Eritrean.

This question has an existential manifestation, which is reflected in a renewed interest in the history of the broader region and how the Eritrean people(s) fit into this history. This orientation is expressed in all forms of social media, including YouTube, podcasts, Internet radio, Facebook, WhatsApp, and Paltalk and by providers of teach-ins, research and political education, which are creatively using a variety of media to reach potential audiences. The use of social media includes many harsh forms that mock the current leadership.

Although the Eritrean government has attempted to control the media (as in Eritrea where there is only state TV), in today's globalized world these controls are increasingly unsuccessful. Refugees and opponents of the regime in the diaspora are posting their own research and opinions to be shared.

The imagined community of Eritrea as territorially-defined and embedded with certain values and cultural features, as propagated by

the Eritrean government, is no longer shared by the vast majority of Eritrean refugees or members of the diaspora. Many Eritreans living outside Eritrea are no longer interested in the 'national project'. They connect an understanding of the ancient roots of the country with today's reality in which they have to survive in the 'region'. They depend on ICTs to connect them with their communities (real and virtual) in many different places. Their country, Eritrea, exists just as much on the Internet as it does within territorial boundaries. The order of things has been profoundly changed.

As this chapter is being finalised, border clashes between Eritrea and Ethiopia have emerged, which are likely to escalate unless the international community will intervene. The first responses to the possibility of a full-blown war demonstrate a divided Eritrean community in which government supporters blame the Ethiopians while civil society organisations call for peace. Some are convinced that an Ethiopian invasion could resolve the dire situation inside the country. Whatever may happen, the Eritrean citizenship is deeply divided over this situation that touches on the fundamentals of the existence of their country. The people outside the country are debating this while inside the country everything is mute and in fear.

This case study of Eritrea supports the hypothesis that ICTs are fundamentally changing the order of things by shaping and reshaping identities of the Eritrean people. ICTs move stories, experiences and emotions across borders and beyond national identities and provoke new worldwide manifestations of identity. Collective trauma is affecting and defining communities, but, contradictorily, is also prompting their disintegration. The reconstitution of the traumatized Eritrean people requires revisiting of their history, which includes revisiting of the concept of the nation state. The questions raised within this context may be a prelude to what is to come, a new and different order of things in which the imagined community is no longer dependent on the concept of the nation state. However, then the question arises by what concepts will Eritrea be replaced? At this stage, we do not know. But we do know that ICTs will play a big role in the new order of things as a driver of change.

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This volume critically interrogates, from different angles and dimensions, the resilience of conflict and violence into 21st century Africa. The demise of European colonial administration in Africa in the 1960s wielded fervent hope for enduring peace for the people of Africa. Regrettably, conflict alongside violence in all its dimensions – physical, religious, political, psychological and structural – remain unabated and occupy central stage in contemporary Africa. The resilience of conflict and violence on the continental scene invokes unsettling memories of the past while negatively influencing the present and future of crafting inclusive citizenship and statehood. The book provides fresh insightful ethnographic and intellectual material for rethinking violence and conflict, and for fostering long-lasting peace and political justice on the continent and beyond. With its penetrating focus on conflict and associated trajectories of violence in Africa, the book is an inestimable asset for conflict management practitioners, political scientists, historians, civil society activists and leaders in economics and politics as well as all those interested in the affairs of Africa.

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